Devotional Verses;

BY

BERNARD BARTON,

Author of "Poetic Vigils," &c.

LONDON.

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DEVOTIONAL VERSES;

Founded on, and Illustrative of

SELECT TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.

BY

BERNARD BARTON.

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INSCRIPTIVE SONNET,

To the Memory

OF

SAMUEL ALEXANDER.

Dear friend, and christian father! unto thee,
Few months gone by, my grateful thoughts were bent
These unelaborate verses to present,
For long, unwearied kindness shown to me:
But it hath pleased Him, who doth not see
As mortals do what most with good is blent,
Such fondly-purpos'd offering to prevent;
Let *this*, then, GRATITUDE'S MEMORIAL be!
No praise of man should mar the opening page
Of him whose volume treats of themes divine,
Nor needs thy cherish'd memory praise of mine;
Yet may thy bright example prayers engage
For faith, love, meekness, greenness in old age,
And every gift of grace so richly thine.

B. B.

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PREFACE.

It was at one time the Author's intention to have published the following Devotional Verses without any prefatory Address: his choice of *plan* and *subjects* appeared to himself so plain and unpretending, that it seemed scarcely necessary to deprecate for his little volume the criticism, that a more elaborate performance might naturally be expected to elicit, but which a manual, so unassuming as the present, might, he hoped, quietly escape. It has, however, been suggested to him, that

his choice itself, both of plan and subjects, requires some prefatory explanation, if not apology; and that, as both may differ widely from those anticipated by some readers, he is bound to state, briefly, what his aim and object have been.

The Author is far from denying, that a volume, bearing the title of "Devotional Verses, founded on Select Passages of Scripture," may excite expectations which the following pages are little adapted to realize. In the many affecting and striking incidents recorded in holy writ; in the numerous glimpses afforded in its earlier pages of pastoral and patriarchal life; in the imposing pictures so graphically painted in its historical parts, of events as sublime as marvellous; in the gorgeous splendours of the Jewish ritual; as well as in the simple, touching beauty of the narrative

portion of the New Testament: in each, and all of these, he readily concedes, might be found themes, inexhaustible, for poetry of the very highest order;—poetry, the composition of which might require the full stretch of talents, to which he assuredly prefers no claim. Let this, then, be his apology to those whose *taste* may lead them to think lightly of his plan, or condemn, as dull and prosaic, many of his subjects;—that he has not been governed in his choice or selection by any insensibility or indifference to what may have appeared more captivating to them in the Inspired Volume; but that he has chosen what may seem a less attractive line, partly from a distrust of his own abilities for a more imposing one, but chiefly because his primary object has not been *poetic effect*, but the expression and inculcation of what has appeared to him SCRIPTURAL TRUTH.

Yet, while the Author would deeply regret, that any truly religious reader should be disappointed in the contents of his little volume, he would be still more sorry so to explain, or apologize for its scope and tendency as one ashamed of his choice, or regretful for his decision. If the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, be, indeed, life eternal; he may surely esteem it no reproach that one of his chief aims, in his selection of passages from the Old Testament, has been the devotional illustration of such as appeared to him to harmonize with the New, by reference or allusion to the gracious and glorious scheme of man's redemption by and through a crucified Saviour. Should he, in his desire to inculcate, enforce, and magnify this sublime and consoling truth, even to iteration, have been somewhat negligent of minor points; inattentive

to adventitious graces; careless of the seeming vantage ground afforded by circumstance, or scenery; he trusts, that such of his readers as may vitally feel the all-absorbing importance of this fundamental doctrine, will forgive what he has *not done*, for the sake of what he has been *desirous* of *doing;* so far, at least, as his humble means and limited opportunities have enabled him.

In the Author's view, indeed, the very title he has assumed for these little pieces, ought, in common candour, to exonerate him from the imputation of lofty pretence: he has entitled them *devotional*, because such, he hopes, their spirit and tendency will be found and felt; but the expression of devotional feeling is by no means necessarily *descriptive*, nor is its strongest appeal, either to the outward sense, the fancy, or the imagination; but, through the

Spirit, to spiritually awakened and spiritually enlightened hearts. Where his language may be unintelligible to these, the Author must regret his own darkness and deficiency; where such can fully appreciate and approve his meaning, he wishes no higher praise. Nor has he even ventured to designate his brief and simple records of thought and feeling by the name of poetry, but has preferred claiming for them the less aspiring appellative of Verses, as more appropriate, not only to what they are, but to what he wishes them to be. At the risque of rendering his pages less attractive to lighter readers, than even *his* modicum of poetic talent might, perhaps, have made them, the Author has endeavoured studiously to avoid all needless ornament, and has been solicitous to "use great plainness of speech;" he has done this, not only in accordance with his own taste in devotional verse,

but in compliance with, and reference to, a far more imperative principle,—that of duty. Whether his sense of duty, in this respect, may have been correct, or erroneous, it becomes not him to determine; but, in his view, neither the expression nor the inculcation of genuine devotional feeling is likely to be rendered at all more effective by the most elaborate and recondite efforts of poetic art. It constituted the very climax of Cowper's panegyric on his "Christian Veteran," that he was, on his favourite theme,

> "Ambitious, not *to shine*, or *to excel*,
> But to treat justly what he lov'd so well."

Though the Author has thought it due to his readers, and not less to himself, thus to enter at some length into an exposition of his views and object, he candidly owns, that the gratification of the mere lover of poetry in the

abstract, has been a very subordinate aim and end with him in the composition of the following pages; nor is he much more sanguine in his hopes of interesting those, whose admiration of the Sacred Volume is rather matter of critical taste, than founded on a more grateful and spiritual appreciation. By those, and those alone, who read the Scriptures with a devotional spirit, and for devotional ends, can the Author wish that his feeble efforts, in the following pages, should be regarded as worthy attention; and for them, only, has he written: if any of the sentiments contained in these Devotional Verses may, through the divine blessing, be rendered in the slightest degree helpful to such, the Author will not have written in vain; if in their view he should have "darkened counsel by words without knowledge,"—no praise of others could compensate for their censure.

It only remains for the Author to conclude; and he does so in the words of Quarles,—as expressing forcibly, though quaintly, his own sentiments: —"A "sober vein best suits Theology; if, "therefore, thou expectest such ele- "gancie as takes the times, affect some "subject as will bear it. Had I laboured "with over-abundance of fictions or "flourishes, perhaps they had exposed "me censurable, and disprized this "sacred subject: therefore I rest more "sparing in that kind. Reader! be "more than my hasty pen styles thee. "Read me with advice, and thereafter "judge me, and in that judgment cen- "sure me. If I jangle, think my intent "thereby is to toll better ringers in. "Farewell!"

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DEVOTIONAL VERSES.

CREATION AND REDEMPTION.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."—Genesis, i. 1, 2, 3.

How wond'rous must have been
The thought-o'erwhelming scene,
When God his own creative might display'd;
Might gloriously employ'd,
Which from the formless void
Call'd countless systems, saw its call obey'd.

His might is still the same;
And those who through the name
Of the incarnate Saviour are set free
From the dread yoke of sin,
Are witnesses within
Of power as great as angels then could be.

These, in the waken'd mind,
A faithful emblem find
Of that dark chaos whence creation rose:
Conscience has rous'd from sleep,
But darkness veils the deep;
Redeeming Love its aid must interpose.

"Let there be light!" is heard,
And with that heavenly word
Light, life, and power break in upon the soul;
Light—life—for death and gloom,
And power to know in whom,
Alone, the impotent are render'd whole.

A Saviour they embrace;
By his redeeming grace
With strength from Him their spirits are supplied:
In his atoning love
Creative power they prove,
And bow in spirit to THE CRUCIFIED!

THE PROMISE.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed, and her seed; it shall break thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Genesis, iii. 15.

REJOICE! ye ransom'd saints,
The promise still endures;
Though feeble nature faints,
The victory is yours.

But not by *you* obtain'd,—
Then hopeless were your trust,
For you, in conflict pain'd,
Know well that man is dust.

Yet though the serpent's power
May still at times appal,
As in the fearful hour
Of Adam's primal fall;—

By you be still refus'd
Each bait by Satan spread,
The woman's seed hath bruis'd
The serpent's crested head.

Your help is from afar,
  Your strength is from above,
Your spirit's guiding star
  A Saviour's power and love.

Though heirs to Adam's guilt,
  Though you his fall have known,
The blood by Jesus spilt
  May render you his own.

THE RAINBOW.

"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud."—Genesis, ix. 13, 14.

STILL in the dark and threat'ning cloud
  That bow is brightly plac'd above;
Nor should despondency enshroud
  The token of eternal love.

More bright, more beauteous are its beams,
Contrasted with surrounding gloom,
Thus heavenly mercy ever seems
Most lovely in impending doom.

A cloudless heaven, to joy's glad gaze,
May be with richer glory fraught;
While sorrow's eye its arch surveys
Without one fond congenial thought.

But when dark clouds obscure the sky
That bow of promise still is fair,
Cheering the mourner's heaven-ward eye,
Teaching his heart that God is there.

ABRAM CALLED.

"Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee."—Genesis, xii. 1.

"GET thee out, and leave behind
All the ties that kindred bind;
From thy home and country go
To a land that I will show."

Such the call the faithful heard;
Flesh and blood had long demurr'd,
Fear'd, and doubted, and delay'd,
Disbeliev'd—and disobey'd.

Abram heard, believing God!
Duty's onward path he trod;
Trusting Him whose word could bless,
Won the meed of faithfulness.

Christian pilgrim, Zion-ward,
True disciple of thy Lord,
May his Spirit to thy heart
Kindred faithfulness impart.

Thou hast heard a voice within;
Let that voice attention win;
Doubt not, fear not, self abhorr'd,
Follow on to know the Lord.

At his bidding sacrifice
More than country's, kindred's ties;
These may still be spared to thee,
Let thy heart thy Master's be.

Daily, hourly, labour there,
Waiting, watching unto prayer;
Wait to know thy Master's will,
Watch and pray to do it still.

Then thy calling shall be sure,
Thy election made secure,
And the meed by Abram won
Thine through his Immortal Son.

THE WILL ACCEPTED FOR THE DEED.

"And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"—Genesis, xxii. 7.

BRIEF colloquy, yet more sublime,
To every feeling heart,
Than all the boast of classic time,
Or Drama's proudest art:
Far, far beyond the Grecian stage,
Or Poesy's most glowing page.

But He whose ever watchful eye
Discerns the heart's intent,
Saw every pang, mark'd every sigh
Which Abraham's bosom rent,
And, when his servant's faith was tried,
An offering for himself supplied.

His mercy, and his tender love
Remain unalter'd still,
As prompt to recompence as prove
Obedience to his will;
And where true faithfulness is shown
To own it for itself alone.

JACOB'S DREAM.

"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."—Genesis, xxviii. 12.

WHY are such splendid glimpses given no more,
Such dreams by night, such visitants by day,
As blest the patriarchs and the seers of yore,
Cheering the pilgrim on his heaven-ward way?

Oh! were our eye anointed and unseal'd
The wonders of redeeming grace to view,
Our mental vision would behold reveal'd
Glories beyond what seers or patriarchs knew.

What though bright glimpses of angelic things
At times might grace the old world's early prime,
Not then had risen, with healing on its wings,
The Sun of Righteousness in light sublime.

Our day and dispensation would make known
Visions as glorious, truths sublimer far,
And hope would render them through faith our own,
Did not our worldliness devotion mar.

Surpassing all the holy patriarch dream'd
Of steps of light by hosts angelic trod,
Would be the beauty of a heart redeem'd,
A heart the temple of the living God.

To such the house of God, the gate of heaven.
Is limited to no peculiar spot,
At Bethel, or at Marah proof is given
Their Lord is with them when they know it not.

JACOB WRESTLING.

"And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."—Genesis, xxxii. 26.

LET me go, thy hope is vain,
Day around us breaketh;
Worn with weariness and pain,
Strength thy frame forsaketh.

No, the patriarch answer'd, No!
Think not thus to press me,
I will never let thee go
'Till thou deign to bless me.

Noble words, heroic vow,
Worthy imitation;
Meet to waken, even now
Holy emulation.

Seed of Jacob! you who share
Aught of Israel's spirit,
Wrestle thus, in fervent prayer,
Blessing to inherit.

Prayer, surpassing human might,
Prayer, Heaven's holy portress,
Prayer, the saint's supreme delight,
Prayer, the sinner's fortress.

Prayer and faith can hope impart,
Hope beyond expressing,
And call down upon the heart
Israel's richest blessing.

SHILOH FORETOLD.

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."—Genesis, xlix. 10.

'Twas thus, with clear prophetic eye
The dying patriarch from afar
Beheld in Bethlehem's cloudless sky
The rising of the eastern star.

That Star has risen; its light has shone
From Calvary's consecrated hill,
Eternal God! thy power alone
Its promis'd glory can fulfil.

Thou gatherest, none can scatter wide;
Thou scatterest, from thy fold we stray;
Thy Spirit to that fold must guide,
Thy Son the Light, the Life, the Way!

The kingly sceptre, regal crown
From Judah's outward tribe have past.
Each relique of his old renown
Low at Immanuel's footstool cast.

From ancient Israel's race and name
  Their early honours far have flown;
Lord! magnify thy Shiloh's name,
  O Father! glorify thine own.

'Till through thy grace from shore to shore
  Thy kingdom spread,—from sea to sea;—
And to thy Son for evermore
  The gathering of the people be.

THE INFANT MOSES FOUND.

"And when she had opened it (the ark) she saw the child: and behold the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children."—Exodus, ii. 6.

VAIN the fond attempt of man
God's supreme decrees to scan,
  Or estimate his ways;
What now is we darkly see,
But what shall hereafter be
  Mocks our feeble gaze.

Levi's daughter scarce could think,
When beside the river's brink
O'er the ark she mourn'd,
How that child in manhood's hour
Should with more than kingly power
Be honour'd and adorn'd.

Pharaoh's daughter little knew,
When, relenting at the view,
She interfer'd to save,
He whose sorrows thus could plead
Egypt's glory soon would lead
To ocean's yawning grave.

God! to thine omniscient eye
Things to come, and things gone by
Are as present shown;
In their origin, and end,
All unto thy glory tend,
And make thy goodness known.

Teach us, then, in Thee to trust,
Wise and mighty, good and just;
That living faith bestow
Which, in moments dark or bright,
Knows that all thou dost is right,
And seeks no more to know.

THE HOLINESS OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE.

"And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."—Exodus, iii. 5.

FEARFUL in holiness wert Thou,
O God! on Horeb's height;
Well might thy servant Moses bow,
And worship at the sight.

Well might he, at such high behest,
With feet unshod draw nigh,
When thus thy presence was confest
In awful majesty.

And what thou wast on Horeb's brow,
Or Sinai's cloud-capt hill,
Thou yet remain'st:—thy presence now
O God! is holy still.

Though not to outward sense reveal'd,
As then to Moses shown,
Nor now in human guise conceal'd
As once on Calvary known:—

Yet through the Spirit of thy Son,
The influence of thy grace,
Thou art not far from every one
Who seeks to know thy face.

Thy gospel light hath shown us where
Thy temple, Lord, should be;
Grant us to feel thy presence there,
To feel, and worship thee.

To bow before thee in the heart
With love and awe profound,
As knowing where-soe'er *Thou art*,
We stand on holy ground.

ISRAEL HUMBLED YET HOPEFUL.

"And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped."—Exodus, iv. 31.

ISRAEL, *humbled*, could *believe*,
Moses' message could receive;
Faith was given to feel that God
Look'd upon the path they trod;

Saw their sorrows, heard their sighs,
Would for their deliv'rance rise:
Then to Him, whose arm could free,
Bow'd each head, and bent each knee.

Oh! that Christians oft'ner knew
What humility can do;
That they truly saw and felt
How affliction hearts should melt;
They, like Israel's sons, would know
Heavenly faith in earthly woe,
Strength in weakness, joy in grief,
Humble hope in pure belief.

'Tis the humble God protects,
'Tis the meek his light directs,
'Tis the mourner sings his song,
'Tis the weak he renders strong,
'Tis the simple who are taught
Wisdom passing human thought:—
Lowly, mourning, simple, weak—
These his glorious praises speak.

THE TYPE OF THE ATONEMENT.

"For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians, and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you."—Exodus, xii. 23.

HORROR was in the cry!
Tears were in many an eye,
And fearful anguish breath'd a fruitless prayer,
When, at the dead of night,
The stern destroyer's flight
Where danger seem'd not scatter'd wild despair.

But where the sprinkled blood
A pledge of safety stood,
The messenger of wrath pass'd harmless o'er;
In quietness they slept,
Or holy vigils kept,
Clos'd until morning every guarded door.

If Israel's sons delight
To celebrate a rite
To which their faithful memory fondly clings,
Should not the Christian too
Herein an emblem view
Of blood more holy, speaking better things!

O Thou! who on the tree,
Our souls from death to free,
Thy cleansing and atoning blood outpour'd,
Incline our hearts to prize
Thy pure self-sacrifice,
And be our Paschal Lamb! Redeeming Lord!

DELIVERANCE IN DANGER.

"Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord."—Exodus, xiv. 13.

A BILLOWY deep before,
The tyrant's host behind them;
Could Israel but deplore
The seeming doom assign'd them?

Yet brief was their command
In hour of tribulation,
Fear not! In silence stand,
And see your Lord's salvation.

They stood, and straightway saw
The deeps for them divided,
And follow'd on with awe
The cloud which safely guided.

They stood, and saw the foe,
With tumult and commotion,
Whelm'd in the depths below,
And buried in the ocean.

Tried follower of the Lamb,
In hour of dark temptation,
Trust in the dread I AM,
Wait for thy Lord's salvation.

Stand still! and thou shalt see,
As faith thine eye uncloses,
An Arm outstretch'd for thee
Stronger than that of Moses.

THE DIVINE SUPREMACY.

"Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"—Exodus, xv. 11.

WHO is like to thee, O Lord!
Among gods by man adored?
Who like thee can save and bless,
Glorious still in holiness?

Fearful yet in praises found,
Doing wonders all around,
Gods that have been, or shall be,
Never can be named with Thee.

Thou alone for ever ART!
Thou alone discern'st the heart;
Thou alone the thoughts dost try,
Thou alone canst grace supply.

In thy providence we see
Daily, hourly marks of Thee;
All that charms our sense or sight
Owns thy rule, and pleads thy right.

Thou, at time's far distant birth,
Formed'st heaven, created'st earth.
Gav'st the sun the day to guide,
Bad'st the moon o'er night preside.

But thy richest crown we trace
In the myst'ries of thy grace;
In redemption's matchless scheme
Own thy love, thy power SUPREME!

There thou risest to our view
As our God and Saviour too;
There we hear thy Spirit's call;
There we find Thee all in all.

THE HEALING OF MARAH'S WATERS.

"And the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet."—Exodus, xv. 25.

MARAH! whate'er the tree might be
Which made thy bitter waters sweet.
The Christian in its power may see
Of power divine an emblem meet.

Full many a cup from which the lip
  Draws back as from a poison'd bowl,
Through love's sublime disciple-ship
  Is render'd grateful to the soul.

The world's distaste, pride's heartless scorn,
  A toilsome life, perchance a grave,
Are things as loveless and forlorn
  As ever was thy bitterest wave.

But these, endured for Jesu's sake,
  Are render'd through his love divine
A cup 'tis pleasure to partake,
  Chang'd by his power like Cana's wine.

The tree which Marah's waters heal'd,
  Which sweetness gave, or could restore,
Is of his cross a type reveal'd,
  Which he who bears repines no more.

Oh! may this love in us abound,
  Guide to our Elim's happy shore,
Where wells for every tribe are found,
  By living palm trees shadow'd o'er.

THE OUTWARD AND THE SPIRITUAL MANNA.

"He that had gathered much had nothing over, and he that had gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating."—Exodus, xvi. 18.

THUS was it with the manna spread
For Israel every even;
Thus is it with the Christian's bread,
His living bread from heaven.

They who went forth at morn to find
That outward food of yore,
Beyond the portion God assign'd
Could heap no added store.

Though worldly prudence might suggest
The morrow's wants were nigh,
Experience soon this truth imprest
God only could supply!

Hence was dependance daily learn'd
On his paternal care,
And still a heaven-ward eye upturn'd
To him in faith and prayer.

O thou! whom Christ has taught to pray
To him for manna now,
In secret each returning day
Before his footstool bow.

He is himself that living Bread,
Descended from on high,
On which the spirit that is fed
Shall never, never die.

To Him in truth and spirit seek,
Who day by day must give
That food which nourishes the weak,
And bids the simple live.

Be less or more to Him resign'd
Who hears and answers prayer,
In whom the poorest riches find,
The richest—none to spare.

SINAI AND CALVARY.

"And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly."—Exodus, xix. 18.

WHAT hope and fear, with hush'd delight
In Israel's sons were blended,
When on Mount Sinai's cloud-veil'd height,
Thy presence, Lord, descended.

When light'nings rent that awful veil
At intervals asunder,
And, turning e'en the boldest pale,
Thy voice out-spake the thunder.

If thus sublimely was reveal'd
The Law's first promulgation,
If thus to sight and sense appeal'd
That earlier dispensation:—

Yet more of glory is descried
On Calvary's holier mountain,
Where from Immanuel's wounded side
Sprang forth Atonement's fountain.

Though all around Mount Sinai bow'd,
And own'd thy presence glorious,
While scorn at Calvary was proud,
And cruelty victorious.

Yet far beyond that earlier scene
Of thunder, smoke, and light'ning,
The Saviour's countenance serene,
With love and mercy bright'ning.

And though sublime that trumpet's peal,
What bosom would not rather
The import of those accents feel
Which said, "FORGIVE THEM--FATHER!"

THE ALTAR'S SIMPLICITY.

"And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it."—Exodus, xx. 25.

LORD! may the precept still impart
Its import to the Christian's heart,
And teach us, as we look to Thee,
Thy worship's true simplicity.

If thus, 'mid ancient forms, the aid
Of human art thy word forbade,
Choosing for altar of thine own
Unhewn, and unpolluted stone:—

By more than emblematic speech
Thy Spirit *now* this truth would teach
Altars of flesh, like those of stone,
Must be prepar'd by Thee alone.

If now to Thee we build no more
An outward shrine as heretofore,
That in the heart, if truly thine,
Must yet be rear'd by power divine.

The meddling touch of human will
Would make that shrine polluted still;
The utmost stretch of human powers
Would leave the fabric only *ours*.

Thine it should be;—in mercy deign
To build—what we but build in vain.
And when the work by Thee is done
Accept its incense through thy Son.

WAITING FOR DIVINE GUIDANCE.

"And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents."—Numbers, ix. 19.

How beautiful the lessons taught
By Israel's journeyings still appear;
With what divine instruction fraught,
For christian pilgrims to revere.

And many a law whose influence sway'd
The earlier chosen of the Lord,
Divinely understood, may aid
Our holy progress Zion-ward.

Have we no ark in this our day?
Are tent and tabernacle gone?
No cloud to tell us when to stay?
No radiant light to lead us on?

What if those outward signs are fled,
Their hidden meaning long shall last,
And souls, by Christ their Captain led,
Learn present wisdom from the past.

Such when the cloud has veil'd from sight
Their ark within, awhile must rest,
And wait the dawning of that Light
Whose guidance heretofore has blest.

But when the fire with brightness burns,
And when the shadowy cloud is gone,
These, as the light of grace returns,
In hope and gladness journey on.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it shall live."—Numbers, xxi. 8.

TYPE of that holier tree,
Whereon the Son of God for sinners died,
The wounded gaz'd on thee,
With fearful hope thy brazen serpent eyed.

Hadst thou such healing power
On those who look'd to thee for aid divine,
Unless, in that dread hour,
Their inward faith confirm'd thy outward sign?

Or will His death suffice,
Who died upon the cross that we might live,
If faith, the pearl of price,
His grace vouchsafe not unto us to give.

But with that peerless boon
The cross of Christ as far exceeds thy power,
As does the blaze of noon
The shadowy splendours of the twilight hour.

For thine could do no more
Than make the impotent in body whole;
But His can yet restore
Light, life, and joy to the immortal soul.

TURNING IN TRIBULATION.

"When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shall be obedient unto his voice; he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee."—Deuteronomy, iv. 30, 31.

WAKEN'D sinner, whelm'd in grief,
Seeking, praying for relief,
Hear the promise of thy God,
Bow beneath his chast'ning rod.

Have his judgments fallen on thee?
Thou may'st yet his mercy see:—
Hast thou fallen on "latter days?"
In them thou may'st sing his praise.

Only turn thee to the Lord,
Every former sin abhorr'd,
Be obedient to his voice,
Then in him thou shalt rejoice.

Not by sorrow of thine own
Canst thou for the past *atone;*
Nor by strength of human will
Canst thou God's commands fulfil.

By his "WELL-BELOVED SON"
That atonement hath been won,
And through faith in him, alone,
Can that power by thee be known.

Be this living faith thy prayer,
Then may'st thou his Spirit share,
Know thy sins within thee slain,
And in Him be born again.

THE CURSE OF DISOBEDIENCE.

"And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron."—Deuteronomy, xxviii. 23.

APPALLING doom! yet hearts there are
Its fearful truth have found,
Have known a heaven where sun nor star
Its radiance sheds around.

A heaven of brass, from whose stern cope
No living waters well'd,
Whereon the rainbow, arch of hope,
The eye hath ne'er beheld.

An earth of iron, whose barren breast
Seem'd icy cold and dead,
Where sterile paths, by joy unblest
In endless maze were spread.

Oh! such a heaven, and such an earth,
Are no delusive dream,
To which wild phantasy gives birth,
Howe'er the worldling deem.

They who have trod that hopeless path,
Beneath that rayless sky,
Have known the hour of righteous wrath
These metaphors imply.

These know how God's most holy will
Can mar creation's face,
And leave the disobedient, still,
No pleasant resting place.

One only hope for such remains;
Repent, return, and live;
He who no penitent disdains,
New heavens, new earth can give.

Simple obedience shall restore
Green fields, and sunny skies;
And hearkening to his voice bring more
Than Eden's Paradise.

THE SPIRITUAL LAW.

"But the word is very nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."—Deuteronomy, xxx. 14.

Say not The law divine
Is hidden from thee, or afar remov'd;
That law within would shine,
If there its glorious light were sought and lov'd.

Soar not on high,
Nor ask who thence shall bring it down to earth:
That vaulted sky
Hath no such star, didst thou but know its worth.

Nor launch thy bark
In search thereof upon a shoreless sea
Which has no ark,
No dove to bring this olive-branch to thee.

Then do not roam
In search of that which wandering cannot win;
At home! At home!
That word is plac'd, thy mouth, thy heart within.

Oh! seek it there,
Turn to its teachings with devoted will;
Watch unto prayer,
And in the power of faith this law fulfil.

THE LOST FOUND.

"He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye."—Deuteronomy, xxxii. 10.

Thus didst thou, Lord, for Israel then,
Thus dost thou now for guilty men;
Yet, yet compassionate, and kind,
Thy love vouchsafes the lost to find.

What numbers, in this gospel day,
Have wander'd widely from thy way,
Into the desert's lone distress,
Sin's waste and howling wilderness.

But thou hast mark'd their footsteps there,
Hast seen their anguish, heard their prayer,
Thy mercy aid has interpos'd,
Thy hand deliverance has disclos'd.

Thou, in that land of fear and doubt
Hast led the wanderers far about;
Thy grace instructed such to see
That help could only come from thee.

Like to the apple of thine eye
Thy love has kept them from on high,
And from that waste and desert strand
Has brought them to the promis'd land.

May these thy mercies ne'er forget,
But honour, love, and serve thee yet;
And sing HIS praise by Jordan's wave,
Who came *the lost* to seek, and save!

THE SAINTS' REFUGE.

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."—Deuteronomy, xxxiii. 27.

All language must be faint
The blessedness to paint
Of those who place their trust, O Lord! in thee;
Whose spirits upward soar
To Thee, who evermore
The refuge of the righteous deign'st to be.

These in the hour of woe,
Which all on earth must know,
Look up to Thee through thy incarnate Son,
And by thy Spirit's grace
On Thee reliance place
Rememb'ring what thine outstretch'd arm has done.

Thou art their refuge still,
In every time of ill,
Beneath are thy eternal arms of love;
On earth they sing thy praise,
And songs more sweet shall raise
To Thee and to the Lamb in realms above.

A PROPHET'S OLD AGE.

"And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."—Deuteronomy, xxxiv. 7.

How lightly o'er thy guarded head
The lapse of silent years had sped,
How poor the spoils of time,
To leave thee thus, in life's last stage,
A living greenness in old age
So splendid and sublime.

Thy natural vigour unimpair'd,
An eye whose lustre still declar'd
Age could not dim its ray,
How brightly must thy sun have set,
Which on the verge of night had yet
The radiance of noon-day.

Had age so vigorous and serene
E'en in that distant era been
A thing regarded not,
Not thus had history's page unroll'd
Thy triumph o'er decay, and told
Thy proud, peculiar lot.

But thus conspicuously was shown
Vigour and brightness not thy own.
To life's last parting hour,
That Israel in that wond'rous sign
Of might more glorious far than thine,
Should own Jehovah's power.

That we, who sooner reach life's close,
May in our weakness yet repose
On his eternal truth,
Who, if to Him alone we live,
In age unto the soul can give
Spring's renovated youth.

STONES OF MEMORIAL.

"When your children shall ask their fathers, in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land." Joshua, iv. 21, 22.

Between us and that land of rest
To which thy grace, O Lord! would guide,
Seems interpos'd, in hours deprest,
A deep, a broad, and billowy tide.

There waves of conflict loudly roar,
  Rocks of temptation there are found,
The winds of pride sweep fiercely o'er,
  And fogs of doubt oft hover round.

And many a once triumphant bark,
  Strew'd on its shore a shapeless mass,
Denotes what countless dangers mark
  The Jordan which the soul must pass.

Yet christian pilgrim, thou to whom
  That land of promis'd rest is dear,
Let not despondency and gloom
  Excite distrust and chilling fear.

Go on in hope and faith like those
  Who bore that hallow'd ark on high,
At whose approach the waters rose,
  And wave-less stood—'till they were by!

He who hath call'd thee by his love,
  Can guard thee safely by his power,
By grace can guide thee from above,
  In peril's and temptation's hour.

His word of promise is as true
  As when the Jordan backward turn'd,
His arm can lead thee safely through
  The deeper tide by thee discern'd.

Can give thee from its hidden bed
Stones of memorial for a sign
That souls redeem'd, by Jesus led,
May trust in power and love divine.

QUIETUDE AND SAFETY.

"They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord."—Judges, v. 11.

How blest the quietude of those
Deliver'd, Lord! by thee;
How safely do their souls repose
By love divine set free,
Deliver'd from the pow'r of sin,
Freed from its galling yoke within.

These drink of that immortal spring
Which every thirst supplies,
Waiting beside its brink to sing
When its blest waters rise,
Whose gentle echoes round prolong
Its music, and their grateful song.

And never noise of archers' bows
  Is by those waters heard,
Nor by the winged shafts of foes
  The balmy air is stirr'd;
No sound of tumult, or of strife,
Is heard beside the spring of life.

But there the ransom'd speak thy praise,
  Thy righteous acts record,
And souls redeem'd glad anthems raise
  To their redeeming Lord;
And far beyond bard's sweetest verse
The grateful song their lips rehearse.

RUTH'S LOVE.

"And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave to her."—Ruth, i. 14.

THOUGH prouder names than thine may live
  In history's richly blazon'd page,
Adorn'd with all that fame can give
  To win the eye from age to age:

Yet by no sweeter, purer fame
Hath joy been gladden'd, grief beguil'd,
Than that which brightly wreaths thy name,
And speaks thy worth, Naomi's child!

Thy story, 'mid the stormier deeds
The annals of thy time make known,
For humble truth and nature pleads
With grace peculiarly their own.

And deep instruction yet is taught
By thy delightful simple tale,
Disclosing to attentive thought
The love which *can* and *cannot* fail.

There is a love, sincere, but weak,
Which has no high, or heaven-ward stay;
Thus Orpah kiss'd her mother's cheek,
Kiss'd her—and wept—yet turn'd away!

Thy own, heroic and sublime,
Still to thy earthly parent clave,
And lives, triumphant over time,
For Heaven its holier courage gave.

And richly God vouchsaf'd to bless
A love devoted, pure as thine,
By making thee the ancestress
Of kingly David's royal line.

VOICELESS PRAYER.

"Now Hannah, she spake in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken."—1 Samuel, i. 13.

BEHOLD how few brief words set forth
Of voiceless prayer the happy lot;
God who inspires it owns its worth,
Though mortal man discern it not:
That prayer which reach'd not Eli's ear,
The Lord stoop'd down from heaven to hear.

And many a prayer from lips that move
In silence now, ascends on high;
By Him who dwells and reigns above
Beheld with no averted eye,
Aye, plum'd with wings, endow'd with sense
Beyond all verbal eloquence.

Then fear not thou, whose faultering tongue
Seems powerless still, when bent the knee.
Though songs of praise by angels sung
In heaven for ever vocal be,
True prayer, though pour'd in sigh and groan,
Soars not unnotic'd, nor unknown.

If grace divine the heart prepare,
A sigh, a groan in Jesu's name
May prove a more availing prayer
Than art's elaborate power can frame;
Nor need our silence be deplored
While hearts are vocal to the Lord.

HIDDEN, BUT HOPED FOR.

"And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision."—1 Samuel, iii. 1.

Not only in the spring-tide hour,
Or summer's bright and fervid power,
Does nature live:—her hidden life
Lives on through winter's stormy strife.

Though perish'd bud, and flower, and fruit,
If deep below survive the root,
When spring shall re-assume her reign,
The sap shall re-ascend again.

Nor had the Lord his people left,
Though Eli's age of strength was reft;
Although his sons their God forgot,
And he their sire restrain'd them not.

Though even near His hallow'd ark
The lamp of God seem'd growing dark,
Though there no open vision told
The glories of the days of old.

Yet still *His word was precious!* still
There were who sought to know his will,
Who look'd unto that ark, though dim,
With hopes and prayers that turn'd to Him.

Those hopes and prayers an answer found
When night seem'd gathering darkly round;
Though he, the guardian of the shrine,
At first knew not the voice divine.

Nor is His church now left by Him,
Though many an Eli's eyes wax dim;
Nor is the Christian's hopeless night,
Though God, awhile, may veil his light.

If precious to His church his word,
Its voice by them shall yet be heard;
Christian, if veil'd that light from thee,
Hidden, but hoped for, may it be.

OBEDIENCE BETTER THAN SACRIFICE.

"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."—1 Samuel, xv. 22.

THINK not, Christian! thou canst choose
How obedience should be shown,
God will evermore refuse
Offering which is not *his own.*

What can sacrifice of thine,
Offer'd in thy strength and will,
Gain thee at that inner shrine,
Where He seeks obedience still?

Hope not what thy choice inspires
Shall divine acceptance win,
But what God himself requires,
And makes manifest within.

There his Spirit gives the law
Graven on tables of the heart;
This to trace with holy awe
Is true wisdom's better part.

There his gospel would reveal
Hope which Christ alone can give;
There before his footstool kneel,
Hear, obey, and thou shalt live.

THE HARP OF DAVID.

"And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."—1 Samuel, xvi. 23.

Oh! for the harp that David swept,
At whose divine entrancing sound
The evil spirit distance kept,
While holier visions hover'd round:
Oh! for such harp in these our days,
To speak a God's, a Saviour's praise.

Then e'en on earth might song outpour
That sweet, that full, triumphant strain
Whose grateful notes should heaven-ward soar,
And there a gracious audience gain;
While here below its hallow'd power
Should aid devotion's happiest hour.

Christian, wouldst thou such harp possess,
May grace anoint thine eye to see,
And on thy mind this truth impress—
The heart that instrument may be:
For never harp or lyre reveal'd
Such music as the heart can yield.

Not in its unregenerate state
Canst thou expect those strains to hear;
By sin unstrung, its accents grate
In discord on a heaven-touch'd ear;
Renew'd by grace, and tuned by love,
Its harmony ascends above.

Oh then with melody it seems
To vibrate from each trembling string;
Each kindling thought and feeling teems
With songs as sweet as seraphs sing;
And music art could never frame
Is breath'd to its REDEEMER'S NAME.

THE PHILISTINE CHAMPION.

"And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span."—1 Samuel, xvii. 4.

THOUGH he of Gath no more
The living God defy,
Champions like him of yore
Satan can now supply.

The champions he can call,
Though hid from mortal sight,
Are deadlier in their thrall
Than that fierce giant's might.

They rise not in the field
Of war, with warlike mien;
But in the heart conceal'd
They fight for him unseen.

Lust, with its wanton eye,
False shame, and servile fear,
Despair, whose icy sigh
Would freeze contrition's tear:—

Doubt, with its scornful jest,
  Pride, with its haughty brow;—
These, lurking in the breast,
  Are sin's Goliaths now.

Vainly our strength we boast,
  Or reason's triumphs tell,
Sin's hydra-headed host
  Arms not our own must quell.

Be ours, then, those alone
  God's word and grace bestow,
Faith's simple sling and stone
  Shall lay each giant low.

PROVED ARMOUR.

"And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them. And David put them off him."—1 Samuel, xvii. 39.

THE shepherd youth, although arrayed
  In helm and mail of Israel's king,
Felt in those royal arms afraid,
  Though fearless with his stone and sling.

His limbs, though deck'd in martial pride,
With no elastic vigour mov'd,
He put the cumb'rous pomp aside,
And took the weapons he had prov'd.

Lord! when we seek to serve thy cause,
In every conflict we may dare,
Like David may we wisely pause,
And try our arms with watchful care.

In armour prov'd, with weapons tried,
Be thou our Captain in the field;
Be all our arms by thee supplied,
And, with them, strength and skill to wield.

Not in our wisdom, or our might,
Or aught of our's be trust repos'd;
They who beneath thy banners fight
Must look for aid by thee disclos'd.

The humblest weapon given by thee
Is render'd mighty through thy name:
All else, though splendid it may be,
Can bring us but defeat and shame.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

"And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord."—1 Kings, viii. 10, 11.

With what magnificence sublime
To outward sense in ancient time
Thy temple, Lord! appeal'd;
When thus, descending from on high,
The glory of thy majesty
Was veil'd—and yet reveal'd.

Well may some moods of thought be known
When to that pomp, for ever flown,
We turn our mental gaze,
And mourn the splendour of the past
Should now no sun-like glory cast
On these degenerate days!

The thought forbid:—teach us to see
A temple, Lord! more worthy thee,
Which thou would'st now prepare
Within the heart by grace divine;
Oh! guide us to that inner shrine,
That we may worship there.

Not all the skill, not all the cost,
Nor rites of Levi's sacred host
Which then adorn'd thy fane,
Could more availing power impart
Than the poor, contrite humble heart
May now from Jesus gain.

On Sinai's consecrated hill,
As in that pile,—*dark clouds* were still
Around thy presence bright;
But in the temple of the soul
The broken heart, by thee made whole,
Shall worship thee IN LIGHT!

THE WIDOW'S MEAL AND OIL.

"And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah."—1 Kings, xvii. 16.

How rich is poverty's scant hoard,
When God hath bless'd its lot;
How poor the heaps that wealth has stored,
If he hath bless'd them not:—
Witness proud Ahab's regal dome,
And the poor widow's humble home.

There dwelt she, with sufficient food
For nature's simple calls;
While fear and caution sentries stood
Beside a monarch's walls:—
Her cruse by power unseen was fed,
Her meal supplied their daily bread.

"The age of miracles is past,"
Some sceptic may exclaim;
But if on God our care we cast,
His power remains the same:—
Nor do our spirits less demand
The bounty of his liberal hand.

Is there no cruse whose store should feed
Devotion's hallow'd fire?
No living bread, whose daily need
Our deathless souls require?
Are there not seasons when we sigh
In secret o'er our scant supply?

Be ours the faith the widow knew,
When she the seer supplied,
So shall we own the promise true,
God's goodness will provide;
The meal shall last, the cruse fail not,
Till plenty be our spirits' lot.

ELIJAH AT MOUNT HOREB.

"And after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle."—1 Kings, xix. 13.

THE wind swept by! God was not there!
The earthquake rock'd the holy hill;
The fire roll'd past with lurid glare,
The Tishbite stood collected still.

The still small voice its signal gave!
Instant he left his hiding place,
Stood in the entrance of the cave,
With watchful ear, and shrouded face.

Solemn description! teaching yet
Important truth to latest time;
Truth ne'er before the spirit set
In form more awfully sublime.

Meek follower of the Nazarene,
Thou well canst read the lesson taught;
Strong winds have pass'd, and earthquakes been.
Which have no certain watch-word brought.

The fire, in conflict's awful hour,
Hath pass'd, and nought but ruin shown;
But in the still small voice have power
And love divine to thee been known.

Then from their innermost recess,
E'en as the seer that cavern trod,
Feeling and thought came forth to bless,
And hear with awe the voice of God.

NAAMAN'S PRIDE AND FOLLY.

"Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?"—2 Kings, v. 12.

THUS arrogant, and thus absurd
Was he who then the prophet heard:
We blame his language;—are not we
As foolish and as proud as he?

A fountain is unseal'd to save,
Of virtue passing Jordan's wave,
Beyond Bethesda's healing spring,
Though ruffled by an angel's wing.

There might we, in this gospel day,
Wash all our leprosy away,
Cleanse from our spirits every stain,
And more than child-like whiteness gain.

But faith is low, and pride is high,
We view that fount with doubting eye,
And choose with proud and angry tone
Abanas, Pharpars of our own.

O Thou! whose love that fount unseal'd,
By which, alone, we can be heal'd,
Strengthen our faith, subdue our pride,
Nor let our leprosy abide.

As then by Jordan's hallow'd brim
The leper's followers strove with him,
Beside thy holier fountain now
Our spirits in subjection bow.

Teach us in simple faith to prove
The power of thy redeeming love,
That like the Syrian we may see,
And own there is no God like thee.

ELISHA'S BONES.

"And they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood up on his feet."—2 Kings, xiii. 21.

HAD Israel's sons forgot the power
Which Jordan's waves had riven,
That to thy bones this healing dower
By miracle was given?

I know not:—but the marvel pleads
Thy mission was divine;
And to a tomb far holier leads
Than sepulchre of thine.

To one where for a season slept
The Lord of life and power,
While angels round their vigils kept,
And watch'd his wakening hour.

The hour when He, triumphantly,
Rose from the silent dead,
And even death's captivity
A vanquish'd captive led.

When from the chambers of the grave
He soar'd to Heaven again,
And by his resurrection gave
Such glorious gifts to men.

Might the rich gifts his blood has bought
Assume their proper place,
The miracles thy reliques wrought
Must yield to those of grace.

To only one thy sacred tomb
Could mortal life restore,
Our Lord's to millions is the womb
Of life which ends no more.

ON THE USE OF TIME.

"And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees."—2 Kings, xx. 10.

It seems a light and trivial thing
To view time's onward flight impell'd;
To mark the shadow of his wing
Turn'd back!—a sight but once beheld.

Once only, to a monarch's prayer,
Was given by miracle divine
The moments pass'd again to share,
And see retrac'd time's shadowy line.

Yet thousands daily live on earth
As if their ineffectual might
Could give this wonder hourly birth
And backward turn time's rapid flight.

O time! Heaven's richest gift to man,
'Till gone—too rarely understood,
How few thy richest treasures scan,
Or rightly estimate thy good.

Far beyond honours, power, or wealth,
The records of thy flight endure,
And render, by unheeded stealth,
The poorest rich, the richest poor,

Abus'd! though fame's proud heights be trod,
Those barren summits nought can give;
Us'd for the glory of thy God—
The humblest in content may live.

Thou Giver of this gift sublime!
Grant us thy grace its use to see,
That we may at the end of time
Enjoy eternity with thee.

THE LORD REIGNETH.

"Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth."—1 Chronicles, xvi. 31.

Be glad ye heavens, thou earth rejoice,
Man! spread through every nation
With joyful and triumphant voice
The gospel of salvation:
Publish his glory, and his praise
Whose word his works sustaineth,
And gratefully this anthem raise
Rejoice! The Lord yet reigneth!

Before His footstool prostrate fall,
Whose gracious bounty giveth
To each created object—all
On which enjoyment liveth:—
From Him alone each good descends,
His arm each ill restraineth;
Then tell to earth's remotest ends
The Lord in glory reigneth!

Praise Him for all that ye possess
  Of riches, glory, power;—
Ye who have neither yet may bless
  His goodness every hour:
His watchful and protecting eye
  The meanest ne'er disdaineth,
Raise then, ye poor, your voice on high,
  For you, for you He reigneth.

But chiefly for salvation's gift,
  Of which He is the Donor,
Angels and men your voices lift,
  In songs of praise and honour:
O sing with gratitude His name
  Whose death our life remaineth,
The love of Jesus loud proclaim,
  And say, The Lord still reigneth.

EZRA'S MOURNING.

"Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Johanan, the son of Eliashib; and when he came thither, he did eat no bread, nor drink water; *for he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away.*"— Ezra, x. 6.

Art thou of Ezra's seed,
Mourning, like him, transgressors led away!
Mourn on! thy holy creed
Foretells thy blessing in a future day.

What though thine eyes be dim
With tears for others who themselves shed none;
Thou yet mayst know, like him,
That joy which only can through grief be won.

Thy soul, in brighter days,
The oil of joy for mourning may possess;
And the glad garb of praise
For the dark vesture of thy heaviness.

Thine eye may see restored
Some for whose bondage thou hast sorrow'd long;
The halt, by thee deplored,
May walk again, the dumb break forth in song.

Some son of Elam yet,
Among the mourning congregation round,
Thy purpose may abet,
Nor leave thee till success thy prayers have crown'd.

If no such aid appear,
Blessings rest on the path by mourners trod,
And not a single tear
Falls from their eyes unnotic'd by their God.

SORROW OF THE HEART.

"Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart."—Nehemiah, ii. 2.

O Lord! thine eye alone can see
The hidden sorrows of the heart,
To which no help, but aid from thee,
Availing comfort can impart:—
Thou hear'st its cries,
Thou know'st its sighs,
Thou wilt for its deliv'rance rise.

It is not sickness which hath chas'd
The rose from off such mourner's cheek ;
The darkening cloud by sorrow trac'd
Tells more than words can ever speak ;
Groans which confess
The heart's distress,
Can only find in thee redress.

Thine arm is shorten'd not ;—thine ear
Is open as in days of yore ;
The first can save, the last can hear,
And thou canst smiles for tears restore,
Give light for gloom,
Recal hope's bloom,
And bring back joy as from the tomb.

NEHEMIAH'S MIDNIGHT SURVEY.

"And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed by fire."—Nehemiah, ii. 13.

The world may call the Conq'ror great,
Who enters with triumphal state
Some captur'd city's walls;
Who wins by prowess of his own
Some rival monarch's envied throne,
And revels in his halls.

Greater and nobler far wert thou,
Though pensive thought might cloud thy brow,
Thus wand'ring forth by night
On Salem's ruin'd walls to gaze,
While memory of her brighter days
Rose with that mournful sight.

The faithful patriot's fond desire,
The prophet's zeal—could hope inspire
E'en in that mournful mood;
Thine was a faith which knew no fears,
A glory sullied not by tears,
A greatness truly good.

Head of the church! to thee we pray,
Oh! raise up in this latter day
Spirits of kindred zeal:—
Spirits that love, in lonely hours,
To count our yet remaining towers,
And watch o'er Zion's weal.

Oh! be to such by thee displayed
The devastations sin has made,
And while they mourn the view,
Show them thy gift of grace, through prayer
And faith, can every breach repair
And build our walls anew.

A KING'S SLEEPLESS NIGHT.

"On that night could not the King sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of the records of the Chronicles, and they were read before the King."—Esther, vi. 1.

Mordecai, though long forgot,
When the monarch slumber'd not,
For the service he had done
Proud and regal honours won.

Long was his reward delayed,
Long he sate in seeming shade,
While the sun shone fair and bright
On the haughty Agagite.

Yet in patient faith he sate,
Watching on at Shushan's gate;
Humble-hearted, hopeful-eyed,
Bowing not to Haman's pride.

Come at last the destin'd hour
When by God's o'er-ruling power
Sleep no soothing charm could fling
On the eye-lids of the King.

Then the Chronicles which told
Service done by him of old,
Gain'd him, at the King's command,
Honours from proud Haman's hand.

Christian, wait and watch like him,
Watch, though every hope seem dim;
Wait, without one murmuring word,
Though reward seem long deferr'd.

Bear with patience, though forlorn,
Haman's obloquy and scorn;
Trust a brighter day to see,
More than Esther pleads for thee.

He whose eye no sleep can seal,
He whose arm can help reveal,
He whose word is faithful yet,
Neither can nor will forget.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE TEMPTER.

"Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die."—Job, ii. 9.

Such is the language to this hour,
Of Satan in the heart,
When tribulation fiercest power
Has wing'd its fiery dart.

When night more dark than of the tomb
Appears to veil our sky,
Are heard his whispers through the gloom—
Now curse thy God, and die.

Why thy integrity retain
When He hath cast thee off,
And left thee to thy foes' disdain,
Or friends' more cruel scoff?

Thou tried, and tempted! hast thou heard
A voice like this within?
Be one unfailing prayer preferr'd—
"Lord, save me from this sin!"

Seek for that patient faith which lives
Dependant on His will,
Whose hand, while every good it gives,
Dispenses needful ill.

Still thine integrity hold fast,
The tempter's counsel spurn,
"Hope against hope!"—and God at last
Will for thy help return.

He never yet abandon'd one
Who strove to Him to cleave,
And watch'd, and waited through His Son
Salvation to receive.

DESPONDENCY REPROVED.

"Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?"—Job, iii. 23.

ENQUIRE not thou *why* light is thine,
Because it useless seems to be;—
While God permits that light to shine,
Doubt not it may be bless'd to thee.

Think not thy way a path unknown,
Though hid from thee, and veil'd from man;
God, from his omnipresent throne
That way can trace, thy footsteps scan.

Nor say that He hath hedg'd thee in,
If scanty seem thy prospect's bound;
When doubt, despondency, and sin,
Perchance combine to hem thee round.

Turn to that light; while light is lent,
Thy way, though hidden, still pursue,
Be with thy present path content,
Though bounded may appear its view.

Lord! when most useless seems thy light,
  Our way most hid, our views obscure,
Teach us to trust thy love, and might,
  To know thy promises are sure.

Within our hearts thy grace reveal,
  Though there it seems to shine in vain;
In paths most hidden make us feel
  That Thou canst make them straight and plain.

CHASTISEMENT MERCIFUL.

"Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty."—Job, v. 17.

INSTRUCT us, Lord! from day to day,
  To feel and understand
How kind and merciful alway
  Is thy chastising hand:
May we such chast'ning ever prize,
And own the mercy it implies.

The sunshine to the flower may give
  The tints that charm the sight,
But scentless would that flow'ret live
  If skies were always bright;
Dark clouds and showers its scent bestow,
And purest joy is born of woe.

He who each bitter cup rejects,
  No living spring shall quaff;
He whom thy rod in love corrects,
  Shall lean upon thy staff:
Happy, thrice happy, then, is he
Who knows his chast'ning is from Thee.

THE PRAYER OF SORROW.

"O that I might have my request, and that God would grant me the thing I long for."—Job, vi. 8.

SUCH, such is sorrow's bitter cry,
Pour'd forth, O God! to thee on high,
  Too oft in hasty mood;
Grief, though importunate it be,
Is little qualified to see
  Its real ill, or good.

Hadst thou, when thus, by grief dismay'd,
For death thy suff'ring servant pray'd,
Accorded his request,
He had not liv'd thy name to praise,
And own his life's concluding days
Its brightest, and its best.

O then instruct us, even now,
When we before thy footstool bow,
And seek through prayer thy face,
That all our supplications, still,
Should own submission to thy will,
Be prompted by thy grace.

That chiefly in affliction's hour
Our hearts may own that precept's power
Taught by thy blessed Son,
Who in *his agony* could pray,
The cup might pass from him—yet say,
Father! Thy will be done!

THE VANITY OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.

"For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow."—Job, viii. 9.

His birth of yesterday,
To-morrow pass'd away;—
His life the shadow of a summer cloud;
Shall mortal man be vain
Of knowledge he may gain
In the brief span of time to earth allow'd?

Not that we under-rate
Or lightly estimate
The triumphs won by many an honour'd name
Of those whose midnight oil,
And unremitting toil,
In outward lore have won them worldly fame.

Yet, oh! how poor, and brief,
Like the frail Cistus' leaf
Must knowledge be—*confin'd* to things of time;
Which, fetter'd by their thrall,
Is ignorant of all
That renders an eternity sublime.

What boots it to be vers'd
In systems schools have nurs'd,—
If, gaining all the lore that these impart,
That truth remain unknown,
Whose teaching power, alone,
Convicts, converts, and sanctifies the heart?

GOD UNSEARCHABLE.

"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?"—Job, xi. 7.

We see, O Lord! from day to day,
In every work of thine,
That goodness, power, and skill, which say,
Thou ART! and art DIVINE!

We feel this truth, from hour to hour,
When deep within the heart
Thy Spirit, with resistless power,
And love—declares Thou art.

More would we know—Thyself alone
Canst banish every doubt;
Vain all researches of our own
Must be to find thee out.

Oh! teach us, then, thine outward word
To study more and more,
And be its oracles preferr'd
To perishable lore.

Instruct us to thy inward voice
To lend a wakeful ear:
In its approval to rejoice,
At each rebuke to fear.

Thy word our law; thy voice our guide;
Thy truth our only stay,
Show us a Saviour crucified,
To Thee, the Light, the Way.

Thus be that saving knowledge won
Which only their's can be,
Who, through the Spirit, and the Son,
Are brought, O God! to thee.

CONFIDING FAITH.

"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."—Job, xiii. 15.

Be such, in trial's darkest hour,
Our trust and confidence in God;
Be such our faith's sustaining power,
Our meek submission to His rod:
Then, though our outward life be slain,
One far more glorious we shall gain.

There is a life we must forego,
If we would shun death's keenest sting;
A death there is we here must know,
If we to endless life would cling:
O Lord! that hidden life supply,
And teach us daily how to die.

Who seeks to save his outward life,
Shall lose the life which Christ would give;
Who dies *for* Him—shall by that strife
With Him o'er death triumphant live!
O for this heavenly life within!
This daily death to self—and sin!

Where these through grace divine are known.
The language of the heart will be,
I live, O Lord! in thee alone,
Though slain—I place my trust in thee;
Enough if by thy power divine
I find my life and death *in* thine.

THE UNPROFITABLENESS OF MAN'S GOODNESS TO HIS MAKER.

"Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? Or is it gain to Him that thou makest thy way perfect?—Job. xxii. 3.

THINK not that righteous acts of thine,
Done in thy might,
Can God delight;
The source of good is grace divine;
And thou must be
Content to see
Thy deeds with borrow'd lustre shine.

Imagine not, poor child of clay!
Without His grace
Thy skill can trace
A perfect path to endless day;
Or were it trod,
That gain to God
Could rise from man's most perfect way.

The proud, the impious thought disown:—
And know thou this,
When bale or bliss
Evil or good to thee have shown,
Thine still remain
The vice and pain,—
Good, and its joy, the Lord's alone.

MOURNFUL RECOLLECTIONS.

"O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness."—Job, xxix. 2, 3

MOURNFUL it seems in darken'd days
To turn to hours more blest and bright,
When God's own glory shed its rays
Around us,—making darkness light.

When we were *kept by Him!* and knew,—
Through faith, which doubt could never dim,
What His eternal arm can do
For those who love and trust in Him.

It may be painful thus to turn
To favour'd seasons—past and gone,
And from our present darkness learn
The value of the Light that shone.

Yet is it good to know from whom
That light divine alone could flow;
And merciful may be the gloom
Which teaches us *its* source to know.

While yet 'mid Eden's beauties rare
Our parents sojourn'd,—they might deem
Each charm its Maker lavish'd there
Was their's by empery supreme.

But from its bowers by sin exil'd,
Were they not taught, in grief and pain,
The woman's Seed, the heaven-born Child—
Alone could make them their's again?

May those who mourn in sin's dark night
Glory not their's, now pass'd away,
To JESUS turn, the Truth, the Light,
Whose love can make their darkness day.

THE HAPPINESS OF THE GODLY.

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither."—Psalm, i. 3.

BLESSED state! and happy he
Who is like that planted tree;
Living waters lave his root,
Bends his bough with golden fruit.

Thine, O Lord! the power and praise
Which a sight like this displays;
Power of thine must plant it there,
Praise of thee it should declare.

Thou must first prepare the ground,
Sow the seed, and fence it round,
Streams that water, suns that shine,
Each and all are ever thine.

When the seedling from its bed
First lifts up its timid head,
Ministry of Thine must give
All on which its life can live.

Showers from Thee must bid it thrive.
Breath of thine must oft revive ;
Light from Thee its bloom supplies,
Left by Thee—it fades, and dies.

Whose then—when a tree up-grown,
Should its fruit be? but thine own!
And thy glorious heritage
Is its fadeless leaf in age.

SALUTARY FEAR.

"Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling."—Psalm, ii. 11.

SERVE God with holy awe,
And strive to keep his law
With perfect love that knoweth no dissembling ;
If, through his grace divine,
The vict'ry should be thine,
Be glad, and grateful; yet rejoice with trembling.

For what is service done
By man,—or trophy won
By the frail son of man, when most victorious,
That he, with haughty tone,
Should deem the palm his own,
Or of his feeble service be vain-glorious?

Can even pride suggest,
When man has done his best,
That fear is folly?—'tis a thought of madness!
Or when—with heart, and voice,
The Christian can rejoice,
Are there no humbling thoughts to chasten gladness?

There is a fear—whose power,
In dark temptation's hour,
Makes him who feels it firmer than the Stoic:
A trembling—in delight,
Which gives the feeble might,
And renders the most humble—most heroic!

SELF-COMMUNION.

"Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still." — Psalm, iv. 4.

ERE thou giv'st thine eyes to sleep,
When thou seek'st thy peaceful bed.
Let thy thoughts their vigil keep,
Let thy soul its wings out-spread.

Commune with thy wakeful heart; —
Be communion joy, or pain:
'Tis true wisdom's better part
Thus to live the past again.

If, with memory's eye review'd,
Peace the parted day affords,
Turn to God with gratitude,
For the glory is the Lord's.

If that retrospect but show
Good neglected, evil done,
Seek for strength, whence strength must flow.
On the morrow such to shun.

Wise are they who every night
  Thus the Psalmist's law obey;
Waiting, watching for that Light,
  Brighter far than beams of day.

Unto such the Light will rise,
  Showing clearly good and ill,
God, whose grace that light supplies,
  Every roving thought can still.

O! how glorious is that ray
  Which no shades of night can dim;
O! how soothing in its sway
  Silence which proceeds from Him.

APPROACHING THROUGH MERCY.

"But as for me, I will come into thy house, in the multitude of thy mercy."— Psalm, v. 7.

O LORD! I enter not thy courts
  In fancied merit of my own;
Thy law has shaken all supports
  Save what thy mercy yet makes known.

The past a dreary waste appears,
The present—but the past renew'd,
The future—fraught with boding fears
But for thy mercy's multitude.

No penitence, though deep, and sure,
No good desires, however strong,
No "high resolves," however pure,
Can vouch for hope of safety long.

These have been trusted, and have fail'd!
That purer, humbler hope make known
Which, in thy boundless mercy mail'd,
Trusts to THY RIGHTEOUSNESS alone.

DIVINE CONDESCENSION.

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" —Psalm, viii. 3, 4.

WHEN I view the vaulted sky,
Rear'd by thee, by thee sustain'd,
Sun, and moon, and stars on high,
By thy fiat first ordain'd,
Lord! what is man? my spirit well may say,
That thou should'st thus be mindful of his way.

What the son of man? that thou
Thus should'st visit him in love?
To his prayer in mercy bow
From thy glorious throne above?—
It is thy condescending grace, whose plan
Thus comprehends, and would ennoble man.

Yet thy holy word hath said,
Thou wilt not for ever strive:—
Fearful hope, and daring dread,
Let this solemn truth revive;
That we, in thy accepted day, and hour,
May of thy visitation own the POWER.

THE BELIEVER'S REFUGE.

"The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble."—Psalm, ix. 9.

How cheerless, Lord! would be the lot
Of those whom man regardeth not,
If, in affliction's darkest hour,
Thy name were not their fortress-tower.

The world can proffer no relief,
E'en to the worldling—in his grief;
Its emptiness is then made known,
It loves—but cannot save its own.

Beasts have their dens—wherein they creep,
Leviathan—the billowy deep;
Birds to their nests for shelter flee;—
Souls troubled and oppress'd—to thee!

Thou art their refuge:—in the day
Of trouble, thou art still their stay;
Thy name, in which is power sublime,
A shelter in the needful time.

But if we hope thine outstretch'd arm
In darker hours when ills would harm,
O! teach our lips, in brighter days,
To bless thy name, to speak thy praise.

For, though thy love may condescend
To be the mourner's surest friend,
Nay, e'en to cheer their adverse lot
Who in past sunshine sought thee not,—

Yet justly may thy praise employ,
The liberal gratitude of JOY,
And selfish, sure, their thoughts must be
Who turn but *in their grief* to thee.

NOTE.

AFTER the composition of the preceding Verses, the further progress of this little volume had been, for some time, suspended; indeed its author had for a while felt little ability or inclination to proceed in it, its completion appearing to him almost a hopeless contingency. A candid statement of this circumstance may perhaps explain, if not justify the insertion of the following.

A SOLILOQUY.

"Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul."—Psalm, xxv. 1.

Once more, lov'd solace of my lonely hours,
Would I renew my intercourse with thee,
Suspended for a time—while Spring's gay flowers,
Her bursting foliage, and her songs of glee
Allured me from my task to budding bowers,
To shady lane, green copse, or blossom'd lea;—
In the fond hope, but not more fond than vain,
Their charms might lend fresh vigour to my strain.

Mistaken thought! To me shall come no more
The once blithe impulse of a vernal day;
Nor can fair nature's countless charms restore
Aught of congenial freshness to my lay;
The sanguine flush of youth's bright morn is o'er.
The fairy dreams of fancy pass'd away;—
And were they still my own they could not lend
One living charm with thy deep truths to blend.

Not that I darkly view, or lightly prize,
The beauties and the harmonies of Spring;
Yet is there what green earth, nor laughing skies,
Nor blooming flowers, nor song of birds can bring
Over the spirit;—hid from human eyes
Deep in the heart, like a far holier thing
Than outward nature's richest stores can yield,
The fount of thought and feeling is unseal'd.

And he who writes of themes which must endure
When times and seasons shall have run their course,
Whose song is TRUTH, unchangeable and sure,
If he aright would feel its truest force,
Must drink of streams unperishing and pure
Which issue from a deeper, holier source;
Looking beyond the fading things of time,
To those which are eternal and sublime.

O! may I now, with no misgiving dread,
Resume the task of many a winter night;
Nor deem devotion's purer influence fled
Because no inly-answ'ring flood of light
From Spring's young glory on my soul is shed:
The just shall walk by faith, and not by sight!
And he who seeks to frame a heavenly song
Through conscious weakness may be render'd strong.

Strong in the might and strength of Him, alone.
Whose spirit down the vale of vision swept.
What time the seer beheld around him strown
Bones dry and lifeless which in silence slept;
These, at the word divine, His power made known,
And on their feet a living army leapt;
So may the spirit He vouchsafes to raise
Revive as from the dead to sing His praise.

CONFIDENCE IN PROTECTION.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters."—Psalm, xxiii. 2.

SHEPHERD of Israel's gather'd fold!
Thy pastures still are fresh and green,
And water'd, as in days of old,
By silent streams of crystal sheen;
And there thou lov'st thy flock to lead
That they may on thy bounty feed.

These, guarded by thine outstretch'd arm,
  Are strong in seeming impotence;
Secured from danger and alarm
  By quiet humble confidence,
And trusting, Lord! in thee alone,
All other confidence disown.

Look down on those who widely stray
  As through a wilderness unblest,
Where no still waters cheer their way,
  Nor herbage yields them food or rest;
Weary and faint the wand'rers roam,
Thy hand, alone, can guide them home.

THE BELIEVER'S LIFE AND LIGHT.

"For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."—Psalm, xxxvi. 9.

THERE is a life, more dear
Than that which by our outward breath we live;
  There is a light more clear
And glorious than the noon-day sun can give.

Deep, deep the heart within,
By grace divine this life is first begot;
Though man, enthrall'd by sin,
In its first breathings, stirrings, knows it not.

In the awaken'd mind
This light first dawns, a faint and glimm'ring ray:
But, to its glory blind,
Man from its gentle radiance turns away.

Thou only, Lord! canst give
The light wherein, alone, THY light we see;
And teach us how to live
An inward life still hid with Christ in Thee.

That so each gift and grace
Bestow'd by Thee its Giver may recall;
And each believer trace
In Thee the Fount of Life, of Light, of All.

THE REWARD OF PATIENT WAITING.

"I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry."—Psalm, xl. 1.

Such was the language us'd of yore,
O God! by Israel's shepherd king,
And they who patiently adore,
And wait,—thy goodness yet shall sing.

Thou didst not hear unmov'd of old
Such waiting suppliant's plaintive cry,
Nor dost thou coldly now behold
The patient mourner's watchful eye.

Thy boundless mercy still is near
To those who would that mercy crave:
Undimm'd thine eye, unseal'd thine ear,
Thine arm omnipotent to save.

But, weaken'd by our sins, and cares,
Our ears and eyes nor hear nor see;
Our hearts grow weary, faint our prayers,
We wait not patiently for Thee.

Nor can we of ourselves obtain
The faith which keeps impatience dumb,
Which waits, though waiting seem in vain,
Believing that thy time will come.

Thy grace, which must the will prepare
To watch and pray at Wisdom's gate,
Must give the boon of patience there
For thy appointed time to wait.

ENCOURAGEMENT.

"He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall he lift up the head."—Psalm, cx. 7.

GREAT need had He who trod for us
The wine-press of thy wrath, O God!
To be refresh'd and strengthen'd thus
In the rough path he meekly trod.

And they who for themselves, alone,
Would seek to shun thy righteous wrath,
Now need each comfort thou mak'st known
To cheer their tribulated path.

And blessed be Thy name, and power,
And His, their high and holy Head,
Thou dost not, in the needful hour,
Forget the toilsome way they tread.

Thou giv'st them, in thy boundless love,
Their hopes to cheer, their souls to stay,
Times of refreshment from above,
And brooks of comfort by the way.

But these, if such we hope to share,
If thine their glorious fruits may be,
Must yet be sought in faith and prayer,
And have their origin *in Thee.*

Gourds we may plant, alas! are vain,
Brief is the shelter they can give;
Cisterns we hew can ne'er contain
Waters by which the soul can live.

The Rock of Ages yet must throw
Its shadow o'er the way we tread,
And living streams which from it flow—
When drank—shall lift in hope the head.

THE SEED OF THE KINGDOM.

"They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy."—Psalm, cxxvi. 5.

Bless'd promise, standing sure through all
The cares and griefs of time,
Well may the heart 'mid these recall
Thy changeless truth sublime.

Of vice each rank and noxious weed
Requires but shallow earth,
The kingdom's pure and precious seed
Demands a deeper birth.

The flower of worldly joy but rears
Its bloom where sunshine glows,
But sown in grief, and fed by tears,
The vine immortal grows.

That vine of which the living Root
Is Christ—the Crucified,
In whom each branch that beareth fruit
Must livingly abide.

This only grows where grace hath first
Prepar'd and sown the ground,
Where love divine its shoots hath nurs'd,
And faith has fenc'd it round.

And they whose hearts have thus been till'd,
Sown, planted—Lord, by thee,
Shall own thy gracious word fulfill'd,
And thy salvation see.

Their hopes, though check'd by frequent fears,
No doubts shall e'er destroy,
But the bless'd seed, first sown in tears,
Their souls shall reap in joy.

THE PRAISE OF GOD.

"Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord!"—Psalm, cl. 6.

'Twas thus the Psalmist clos'd his lays,
Invoking all to join his praise;
Oh! who shall disobey a call
Which solemnly appeals to all?

What heart can truly feel his strain,
And prove that invocation vain?
What spirit but, with full accord,
Must inly answer, "Praise the Lord!"

Yet who, O God! by thee untaught,
Shall dare to praise thee, e'en in thought?
When seraph harps around thy throne
Wake to that theme their sweetest tone.

No pomp of verse can win thine ear,
Genius itself is powerless here;
The only praise by Thee desir'd
Must be by Thee alone inspir'd.

Thy Spirit must its aid impart,
Must cleanse and sanctify the heart;
And through thy Son, for sinners slain,
Our spirits must be born again.

Thus, only, man is render'd meet
A strain so heavenly to repeat;
Then, only, can he hope to raise
To Thee accepted songs of praise.

The ransom'd and redeem'd alone
Can make thy glorious triumphs known;
And e'en their silence oft may be
The most expressive praise of Thee.

SPIRITUAL ECONOMY.

"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."—**Proverbs, xi. 24.**

If here instruction we may trace,
Applied to outward wealth,
Not less it teaches us of grace,
And of the spirit's health;
There is that scattereth—but to gain,
There is that hoardeth—but in vain.

The single talent's humble worth
If us'd—its meed had gain'd;
The ten—if buried in the earth,
No blessing had obtain'd:—
In goods without, in grace within,
The liberal truest riches win.

Love's is a *social* law! and they
Who thus themselves bereave,
Fling not the Spirit's gifts away,
But—giving, shall receive:—
Their bread upon the waters cast
Shall all return to them at last.

They shall be render'd rich above,
Surpassing worldly pelf,
In their dear Lord's atoning love,
Who freely gave himself!
Who, rich and sinless, came to share
Our poverty, our sins to bear.

Nobly hath He exemplified
True wealth's unbounded store,
Which is increas'd when scatter'd wide.
And us'd—abounds the more,
When in the riches of His grace supreme
He gave His life to ransom and redeem.

SIGNS AND TOKENS.

"He that observeth the wind, shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap."—Ecclesiastes, xi. 4.

CHRISTIAN pilgrim, seeking still
Zion's high and holy hill,
May thy Lord to thee impart
Single eye, and stedfast heart.

Place thy trust in grace divine,
Heed not thou each changing sign;
Shouldst thou witness many a change,
Count not these as tokens strange.

Winds may rise of fearful sound,
Darkest clouds may gather round,
These may usher cloudless day,
Those but waft thee on thy way.

He who watcheth winds that blow,
May too long neglect to sow;
He who waits lest clouds should rain,
Harvest never shall obtain.

Signs and tokens false may prove,
Trust thou in a Saviour's love,
In his sacrifice for sin,
And his Spirit's power within.

Keep thou Zion-ward thy face,
Ask in faith the aid of grace,
Use the strength which grace shall give,
Die to self—in Christ to live.

Faith in God, if such be thine,
Shall be found thy safest sign,
And obedience to His will
Prove the best of tokens still.

THE CHURCH IN HER BEAUTY AND PURITY.

"A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."—Solomon's Song, iv. 12.

DELIGHTFUL emblems, in whose guise is shown
Thy church, O Lord, from spot and wrinkle free:
"The world unknowing, by the world unknown,"
Chaste and devoted in her love to Thee.

Then Thou to her art fairest of the fair,
The chief among ten thousand :—every crown
And palm victorious which her children wear,
Before thy throne of glory is cast down.

Then, every anxious care on Thee repos'd,
Her image to the spirit seems reveal'd
A beauteous garden, by Thy love inclos'd,
A spring shut up, a living fountain seal'd.

Lovely as Eden, ere by sin's deceit
The tempter there a fatal entrance found ;
Pure as a chrystal fount in noontide's heat,
Whose sunless depth by rocks is guarded round.

Her's is that state of holier innocence
Fall'n nature of itself can never know ;
Thy arm's inclosure is her living fence,
Thy grace which made her pure must keep her so.

THE CHURCH IN HER DESOLATION.

"And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city."—Isaiah, i. 8.

Such the desolate condition
Of thy church, when sick at heart;
Haste to save her, great Physician,
Much she needs thy healing art.

Balm in Gilead still is growing,
Balm which every wound can heal,
Haste, thy skilful aid bestowing,
Thy compassion to reveal.

Like some poor, besieged city,
Zion's daughter now appears;
Lord, look down on her with pity,
Hear her sighs, behold her tears.

Turn thy righteous hand upon her,
Purge away her dross and tin,
Vindicate thy name and honour,
Once enshrin'd her walls within.

Once more from Thee favour winning,
Judges unto her restore;
As she had at the beginning,
Give her counsellors once more.

Raise up nursing sires and mothers,
Be thyself her Priest and King;
Make her sons a band of brothers,
Daughters—meet thy praise to sing.

So shall sin no more defile her,
Thy salvation they shall bless,
And the earth again shall style her
City of thy righteousness.

ZION'S HOPE OF REDEMPTION.

"Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness."—Isaiah, i. 27.

WITH judgment, passing that of man,
By righteousness, but not their own;—
Such still redemption's glorious plan,
Thus Zion's converts still are known.

The judgment which redeems must be
That of the Holy Ghost, and fire;
This, only from each sin can free,
And full, confiding faith inspire.

The righteousness which standeth sure,
The convert must in Christ attain;
This only, perfect, spotless, pure,
Shall in the end acceptance gain.

Behold the cause why Zion still
Is unredeem'd, unsanctified;
Why converts, impotent of will,
Faint, falter, fall on every side.

Vain of *our* judgment, we are led
To trust its strength in evil hour,
And shun, as with instinctive dread,
The Spirit's deep baptismal power.

Proud of our fancied righteousness,
Which self in splendid colours paints,
We seek not, strive not to possess
The purer garment of the saints.

Helper of Zion! dissipate
The clouds which yet her glory mar,
And show us, ere it be too late,
What righteousness and judgment are.

THE DAY OF DIVINE VISITATION.

"And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."—Isaiah, ii. 11.

CAN language utter,—pen record
The wonders of that day
When Zion's righteous Judge and Lord
Asserts his sovereign sway?

Where are thy cedars, Lebanon,
So late uplifted high?
Where are the oaks of Bashan gone,
Whose strength might storms defy?

And thus the glory of the proud
The cedar's lot must know;
The strongest as a reed be bow'd,
Like Bashan's oak—laid low.

The ships of Tarshish—types of art
And wealth,—delight no more:
The pleasant pictures of the heart
Be darkly shadow'd o'er;

And every idol thought can claim
  Abolish'd, and o'erthrown,
That so the Lord's exalted name
  May reign and rule alone.

Such is the day, and such the hour
  Of visitation still,
When God ariseth in his power
  To bend, and bow the will.

And bless'd are they who through His grace
  In visitation bow,
Who vow, henceforth, to seek His face,
  And keep that solemn vow.

CHRIST'S TITLES AND ATTRIBUTES.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."—Isaiah, ix. 6.

DOUBTING Christian, why forlorn?
  Art not thou an heir of heaven?
Unto thee a Child is born,
  Unto thee a Son is given.

His the government sublime
Of his own redeeming grace,
Far beyond the bounds of time,
Far beyond thy views of space.

Wonderful—His name shall be,
Counsellor—in paths untrod,
Everlasting Father—He,
Prince of Peace, and Mighty God.

Glorious titles! Power divine!
Hear, believe, obey, and live;
Faith their fruits shall render thine,
God, alone, that faith can give.

Faithless,—thou must be forlorn,
Tempest-toss'd, at random driven;
Unto thee no Child is born,
Unto thee no Son is given.

But, believing, thou shalt know
Winds and waters hush'd and still'd,
Toss'd no longer to and fro,
See each prophecy fulfill'd.

Pray for faith!—that reconcil'd
Unto God—thy soul may see
Born for thee this sinless Child,
And the Son thy Saviour be.

CHRIST THE SURE FOUNDATION.

"Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."—Isaiah, xxviii. 16.

THUS saith the Lord of Hosts—Behold,
Henceforth in Zion I make known,
By ancient prophecy foretold,
A tried, a precious Corner-Stone.

A sure Foundation, which shall stand
When storms descend, and tempests beat;
When structures human skill has plann'd
Their fearful, final ruin meet.

Lord, thy right hand that Stone has laid,
O make it precious in our sight!
That in thy power, and through thy aid
Each builder may proceed aright.

On trustless sands, with heedless haste,
Man's Babel, rear'd, delights his eyes;
But, on the Rock of Ages plac'd,
Thy edifice must *slowly* rise.

There things corruptible are shown
  Worthless materials still to be,
The incorruptible alone
  Can form a temple worthy Thee.

Alike unfurnish'd, and unskill'd
  Are we, except Thy grace provide;
Thou only canst instruct to build,
  Who hast the Corner-Stone supplied.

GRACIOUS PROMISES.

"But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."—Isaiah, xliii. 1.

Fear not, Jacob, tribulated,
  Fear not, Israel, disesteem'd;
I, the Lord, who first created,
  Have as gloriously redeem'd.

By thy name my love has call'd thee,
  Bade my light around thee shine,
Broke the fetters which enthrall'd thee,
  Through redemption made thee mine.

Fear not, Zion's sons and daughters!
Perfect love should cast out fear,
When ye pass through deepest waters,
I, your Saviour, still am near.

Overwhelm'd by waves of sorrow,
Place your trust in Zion's King;
Thence fresh comfort ye shall borrow.
Thence memorial stones shall bring.

In the furnace of affliction,
I will save you from despair;
Love divine shall bring conviction
That my arm is round you there.

Never shall you be forsaken,
Nothing shall have power to harm,
While your faith remains unshaken
In Jehovah's outstretch'd arm.

Heights nor depths shall from me sever
Those whom Christ hath brought to me.
I will keep them safe for ever,
And their God and Saviour be.

A PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH.

"Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old."—Isaiah, li. 9.

ARM of the Lord, awake,
Put on thy strength as in the days of yore,
And for the Church's sake
Exert thy righteous energies once more.

Art Thou not it—whose might
Smote Rahab?—gave the Dragon's cureless wound?
Oh! deign for us to fight,
Whom foes as deadly now beset around.

Art Thou not it—whose power
Dried the sea's depths in Israel's earlier day,
And in their favour'd hour,
Made for the ransom'd of the Lord a way?

Once more, once more arise;
As in the ancient days for us appear;
The deep before us lies,
And worse than Pharaoh's host are in our rear.

That so the Lord's redeem'd
With songs of praise to Zion may be led,
Thy glory be esteem'd,
And everlasting joy be on our head.

FREE REDEMPTION.

"For thus saith the Lord, ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money."—Isaiah, lii. 3.

YE sold yourselves for nought,
Redemption is as free,
Why are ye not then brought
By Jesus unto me?

Such, Lord, thy language still,
The gracious words repeat,
And bend and bow the will
Before thy judgment seat.

There mercy yet is shown,
There love still hovers round,
Salvation is made known,
And free redemption found.

Though we ourselves have brought
To slavery's galling chain,
A Saviour's love, unbought,
May ransom us again.

Though sin's destroying flood
Have swept our peace away,
Yet Christ's atoning blood
That torrent's course can stay.

Though earth contain no gem
To ransom man from vice,
In thy bright diadem
Is set that Pearl of Price.

A Pearl—compar'd with which
The ruby has no worth,
Which makes the poorest rich,
Possessing more than earth.

And they who seek thy face,
Thy mercy shall supply,
From free, unpurchas'd grace,
With what worlds could not buy.

SLOWLY, SAFELY, AND SURELY.

"For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rearward."—Isaiah, lii. 12.

WHEN Israel's sons from Egypt's land
Were brought by God's resistless hand,
Not their's the captive's fearful flight,
But the strong march of guarded might.

God went behind them, and before,
To guard and guide to Canaan's shore;
By night a fire to point their way,
A pillar of a cloud by day.

And those who now deliverance win
From death and darkness, self and sin,
Nor haste, nor flight tumultuous prove,
But slowly, safely, surely, move.

He whose almighty power hath broke
A heavier far than Egypt's yoke,
Whose love has foil'd the tyrant's wrath,
Still guides and guards his people's path.

Not their's the fugitive's escape
Whom dangers daunt in every shape;
Not their's the captive's hurried pace
Who fears the conq'ror's eager chace.

Captives they were in slavery's hour,
Now more than conq'rors through His power
Who lov'd, redeem'd, and set them free,
And bade them his salvation see.

Slow, safe, and sure the path assign'd,
God moves before them, and behind,
Present to faith, when lost to sight,
Their cloud by day, their fire by night.

CHRIST'S ATONEMENT.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."—Isaiah, liii. 5.

LORD! hast thou meekly suffer'd thus
For fall'n and guilty man?
And shall we coldly now discuss
Thy love's stupendous plan?

Nay, not thy gospel's scheme alone,—
False reason, soaring high,
Which thy *Atonement* would disown,
Thy *Godhead* dares deny.

But those whom faith has given to learn
Of grace each type and sign,
In each, through all, alike discern
A *Source*, and *Power* divine!

These, knowing that they are but dust,
Thy word of truth believe,
Place in that word their simple trust,
And faith from Thee receive.

Thy Holy Spirit's aid they crave
To make thy counsel known;
This shows a Saviour, prompt to save,
Almighty to atone.

Then Christ is precious in their sight;
For them the Lamb was slain,
And in His glorious life and light
Their souls are born again.

Born to a life which shall not cease,—
His stripes their wounds have heal'd,
And by His chastisement of peace
Their peace with God is seal'd.

THE ONLY SAFE GLORY.

"But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."—Jeremiah, ix. 4.

Let not the mighty glory in his might.
Let not the wise be of his wisdom proud,
Let not the rich man in his wealth delight,
For these shall vanish like a summer cloud.

But he that glorieth—let it be alone
In understanding, Lord! and knowing thee.
Through mercy, judgment, righteousness made known
His strength, his wisdom, and his wealth to be.

This is the understanding which makes wise,
Wise to salvation:—this the knowledge still
Which, far surpassing all the world supplies,
Restrains the passions, sanctifies the will.

He who thus glories only seeks to show
His rev'rent homage to the Lord of all;
His is the lowly pride the humble know,
The exaltation which can fear no fall.

THE BLESSINGS OF EARLY RESTRAINT.

"It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him. He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope."—Lamentations, iii. 27—29.

LORD, bless'd is he who learns to bear
Thy yoke in tender youth;
Whom teachings of thine own prepare
Betimes to know thy truth.

Good is it—in thy holy sight,
Who view'st with partial eyes,
E'en with a Father's fond delight
Such early sacrifice.

Good is it for Thy church's sake;
For he, thus taught to bear,
A pillar in that church shall make,
And show thy praises there.

And goodly is the portion still
Of him, whoe'er he be,
Who early knows thought, word, and will,
Subjected unto Thee.

His shall be light in darkest hour,
His—patient waiting too;—
In Thy unfailing arm of power
His strength shall he renew.

He shall sit silently, alone,
His mouth as in the dust,
To see Thy holier hope made known,
In which is plac'd his trust.

To him, in Thy appointed time,
That hope shall yet appear,
Whose power, eternal and sublime,
Can cast out every fear.

A NEW HEART, AND A NEW SPIRIT.

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."—Ezekiel, xxxvi. 26.

CHRISTIAN, behold a simple test,
Which, in the light of truth, makes known,
As God can only manifest,
Who are, and who are not his own.

What know'st thou of a heart thus chang'd?
Or is thine what it was of old,
From God and things divine estrang'd,
Obdurate, earthy, stony, cold?

What know'st thou of the holy birth
Of this new spirit, born within?
Is thine still fetter'd to the earth,
The sport of folly, slave of sin?

Trust not a name, whate'er it be,
If still thy nature be the same:—
The faith which wins no more for thee
Will prove, indeed, an empty name.

Turn inward to the work afresh,
Waiting and watching unto prayer;
So may'st thou know a heart of flesh
Thy stony one supplanting there.

Humbly implore, for Jesu's sake,
Whose name is yet with power endued,
That through His grace thou may'st partake
A spirit livingly renew'd.

No outward homage of the lip
Can christian fellowship impart;
The badge of true discipleship
Is change of spirit, and of heart.

HOPE LEFT WHILE THE ROOT LIVES.

"Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field, and let it be wet with the dew of heaven."—Daniel, iv. 15.

HATH not the vision now
Its sure interpretation? Are there not
Roots, bearing trunk nor bough,
Yet living in the earth, unseen, forgot?

Is there not, known to Thee,
Saviour and Lord, the church's living Head!
Full many a goodly tree
Whose early shoots by Thee were nurtur'd, fed?

But when thou hadst a right
To look for fruit, on these no fruit was found:
Their beauty thou didst blight;
With brass and iron thou their root hast bound.

Such are existing yet,
Permitted in thy boundless love to live;
May heavenly dews still wet,
And tender grass its nourishment still give.

That so each hidden root
Spared by Thy mercy thus to live unseen,
In days to come may shoot,
And once more wave its branches fresh and green.

Thy hand, which did not spare
The barren beauty of its earlier days,
May cause it yet to bear
Immortal fruit to Thy eternal praise.

THE FRAILTY OF MAN'S GOODNESS.

"O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away."—Hosea, vi. 4.

Such the transient influence now
Of too many a fervent vow;
Such in spirit and in span,
Goodness deem'd innate in man.

Like a morning cloud it flies,
Like the early dew up-dries,
Brief as bright, and frail as brief,
Like the changing Cistus' leaf.

Clouds which bear the welcome shower
Wait not on man's fancied power;
Dews that nourish where they fall
Come not when he deigns to call.

Blossoms time may not impair
Deathless Amaranths must bear;
And the goodness which shall live
God alone to man can give.

Judah's God, and Ephraim's Lord,
Unto us thy grace accord;
Make *Thy* gracious goodness known,
Show how trustless is *our own.*

Morning clouds, though bright their dyes,
Fade before our thirsty eyes;
Dews which early pass away
Leave our hearts to drought a prey.

Give us darker clouds, whose gloom
Bears rich blessings in its womb;
Heavier dews which fall at eve,
Whence Thy seed may life receive.

SIN'S DEVASTATIONS NOT IRREPARABLE.

"And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm, my great army which I sent among you."—Joel, ii. 25.

Mourners, whose hearts are oft afraid,
Whose eyes are fill'd with frequent tears,
Viewing the havoc sin has made
In darker days of former years;—
Look unto Him whose arm made bare,
Each devastation can repair.

At His commandment yet may thrive
  Of purer life each hidden germ,
And bring forth fruit which shall survive
  The canker and the palmer-worm:
The locusts' spoil, of years gone by,
To you His mercy can supply.

'Tis well that man's awaken'd sense
  Should trace the past with fear and shame;
Should know his enemies, and whence
  Each hydra-headed monster came;
Yet not less needful he should feel
Whose hand can every ravage heal.

Thus taught, the humble heart shall own
  Its deadliest foes are born within;
That God hath made the spoilers known.
  The spoil'd unto himself to win;
Rendering the former, by His might,
An army for His cause to fight.

THE FAMINE OF THE WORD.

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."—Amos, viii. 11.

O LORD, avert from us this day
Of famine's fiercest strife;
And take not from our souls the stay
And staff of endless life.

Though we too often have preferr'd
Time's transitory things
Before thy pure and precious word
Which sure salvation brings;

Yet suffer not our souls to know
This famine, worst of all;
Lest, victims to its wasting woe,
We miserably fall.

O rather, since the power is thine,
While yet thy word is near,
Compel us by thy voice divine
To lend a wakeful ear.

Though justly stern its tones may sound,
These thou canst teach to bear;
Far better judgment reign around
Than silence and despair.

Although the food Thy word may give
Be wormwood to the soul,
Better it is on this to live,
Than pleasure's sparkling bowl.

Oh, teach us most that death to fear,
By inward famine slain,
Which, dying, thirsts thy voice to hear,
Yet thirsts, alas, in vain.

PRIDE REPROVED.

"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord."—Obadiah, verse 4.

Who art thou, that, soaring high,
Pride of heart thy bosom swelling,
Look'st around with haughty eye,
Trusting in thy lofty dwelling?

Stoop thy wing, or thou'rt undone;
Let not pride of heart deceive thee;
He, the High and Holy One,
Of thy dwelling shall bereave thee.

Though, 'till check'd by wrath, or love,
Far from earth thy spirit wing thee,—
Rear its home the stars above,—
Yet from thence the Lord shall bring thee.

Bring thee down, and lay thee low,
Lower than the most inglorious;
Soon thy humbled pride shall know
His almighty arm victorious.

Then forbear to trust thy flight,
Even to the eagle's pinion;
Learn in time Jehovah's might;
Bow to God's supreme dominion.

Kiss the Son lest he be wrath,
Dare not with the Word dissemble,
Choose a humbler, safer path;
Know thyself, and fear, and tremble.

USELESS FLIGHT.

"But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord."—Jonah, i. 3.

And couldst thou fancy, then,
Tarshish beyond the ken
Of Him whose presence fills unbounded space?
Who, from the heavens on high,
With sleepless searching eye,
Even the depths of hell itself can trace?

Weak though the thought might be,
There are who censure thee,
Who would no less God's holy presence shun;
Weakness surpassing thine,
Whose mission, though divine,
Might hope to win belief from few or none.

Such, when they feel within
His power convict of sin,
Turn from the witness for His righteous will;
In earth's delusive joys,
In business, strife, and noise,
Striving to drown the voice they cannot still.

As well to Tarshish flee,
As hope to 'scape from Thee,
God omnipresent, and omnipotent!
Closing with coward fear
That inward eye and ear,
Whose powers for nobler purposes were lent.

Ungrateful, and absurd;—
E'en by the deafest heard,
Thy still small voice shall speak in thrilling tone.
On the eye's darkest night
Shall burst thy piercing light,
In judgment or in mercy *both* be known!

HOPE IN CONFLICT.

"Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." —Micah, vii. 8.

REJOICE not over me, my foe,
Though fall'n, I am not slain;
In mightier power than thou canst know
I shall arise again.

Think not, though clouds may gather round,
That mine is starless night;
Even amid that gloom profound
The Lord will be my light.

Such is their language, Lord, whose hearts
All confidence disown,
Save what Thy word of truth imparts,
And crave Thy power alone.

These, even while they mourn each fall,
And view *themselves* with shame,
On Thee, afresh, for succour call,
And trust a Saviour's name.

Thou art to them in darkest hour
Their comfort, hope, and stay;
Well knowing that thy arm of power
Can make their darkness day.

These meekly strive to bear thy rod
With patient, reverend awe,
Conscious that they, O righteous God,
Have disobey'd thy law.

Yet, in their chastisement they place
Full confidence in Thee,
And for thy holy gift of grace,
Before Thee bend the knee;

Imploring Thou wilt plead aright
Their cause, their struggles bless;
And bring them forth unto the light
To see thy righteousness.

COMFORT IN A CLOUDY DAY.

"The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet."—Nahum, i. 3.

EXPECT not, pilgrim, Zion-ward,
A bright sky always will be thine,
Or that the presence of thy Lord
Will constantly around thee shine:
If all were clear, around, above,
What test could prove thy faith and love?

In storm or whirlwind, as in wrath,
He holds unseen his righteous way,
Dark clouds denote his viewless path,
And thine may seem a winter's day,
Yet not the less His path may be
One of unbounded love to thee.

Be patient, though the sea be made
  Before him like a desert, dry,—
Though Bashan languish, Carmel fade,
  And flowers of Lebanon may die;
Yet slow to anger is the Lord,
A tower of strength His name ador'd.

The Lord is good: He still remains,
  As in the ancient days of old,
When doubt, or fear, or trouble reigns,
  A strong, a safe, a stedfast Hold;
When hearts are faint, and eyes are dim,
He knoweth them that trust in Him.

GETTING TO THE WATCH-TOWER.

"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved."—Habakkuk, ii. 1.

Oh, were this waiting, watching frame
Yet more and more the Christian's aim;
Yet more and more his inward eye
The Saviour's kingdom should descry.

Yet more and more his inward ear
Of holiest oracles should hear;
Yet more and more his heart should feel
What God will only there reveal.

'Tis not by running to and fro,
The language of the Lord we know;
On the lone watch-tower of the heart
His truth he will himself impart.

There must the Christian watch and pray,
Waiting to hear what God shall say;
There be instructed to reply
When he shall be reprov'd on high.

But thou hast watch'd and waited there,
And found no answer unto prayer;
To thee the vision will not come,
To thee the Oracle is dumb.

What said the Lord unto the seer,
Who thus resolv'd in holy fear?
The vision, for a time deferr'd,
Shall in the end be seen and heard.

Oh, let not, then, thy faith be weak,
For, in the end, its voice shall speak,
And in the Lord's appointed time
That voice shall teach thee truths sublime.

THE LUKEWARM THREATENED.

"And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil."—Zephaniah, i. 12.

ZION's children, sunk in ease,
From your dang'rous rest awaken;
Spirits, settled on your lees,
By the Lord ye shall be shaken.

Say not in your hearts "from God
Good or ill no more proceedeth,
What the paths by mortals trod,
He, the Lord, no longer heedeth."

Know ye, that the time draws nigh,
When the Lord, his power revealing,
Hearts will search, and reins will try,
Unto each in turn appealing.

He Jerusalem will search
By his own illumination,
He will visit yet his church,
Proving every man's foundation.

Unto you, who sit at ease,
Shall the trumpet sound in Zion;
You too, settled on your lees,
Shall be rous'd by Judah's lion.

For that trumpet will reveal
Joy or woe for endless ages,
And that lion will unseal
Life's or death's eventful pages.

A CALL TO BUILD THE LORD'S HOUSE.

"Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house to lie waste?"—Haggai, i. 4.

O YE, who in ceil'd houses live,
Can you, escaping guilt and shame,
Delay unto the Lord to give
A habitation for his name?

If thus the prophet spoke of yore,
Chiding the people's long delay,
Whose hands were slack to build once more
A fabric which should pass away;

Doth not the Spirit now upbraid,
Though with a voice of love divine,
Hearts as reluctant, or afraid
To rear a holier, purer shrine?

To such, the language of the Lord
Is now, "Consider ye your ways!"
Why build ye not, with one accord,
A temple worthy of my praise?

My gifts and graces were not meant
Ceil'd houses unto you to give;
Wherein, supinely indolent,
Each one unto himself might live.

I gave them that mine eye might see
Uprear'd, an edifice divine,
And *you* the *living stones* should be
To form this glorious house of mine.

THE FOUNTAIN OPENED.

"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."—Zechariah, xiii. 1.

FROM Zion's holy mountain
The tidings loud proclaim;
The Lord hath op'd a fountain,
Salvation is its name.

Its purifying waters,
The house of David know,
And Salem's sons and daughters,
There wash'd, are white as snow.

From sin and from uncleanness
That fountain can redeem;
There age may find fresh greenness,
Thence youth with wisdom teem.

The blind and deaf, there drinking,
At once both see and hear;
The lame, with feet unshrinking,
Are swift, as is the deer.

The dumb, who seek in sadness
That water's living spring,
In grateful songs of gladness
Its hallow'd praises sing.

Breaking each chain asunder,
That fount can freedom give;
And, all-surpassing wonder,
Hath caus'd the dead to live!

"Whence flows this tide of healing,
That does such wond'rous things?
Oh haste, its source revealing,
That *I* may seek its springs."

Sinner, thy prayer is granted,
It flows from Jesu's side;
Thence, whatsoe'er is wanted,
To man must be supplied.

GOD CHALLENGETH THE PROOF OF HIS GOODNESS.

"Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."—Malachi, iii. 10.

THUS, though to many a doubtful ear,
Spoke the divinely gifted seer;
And such, to many a faultering will,
May be Truth's living language still.

Are there not, gracious Lord, whom thou
Hadst crown'd with blessings long ere now,
Had but obedience to thy grace
With knowledge kept proportion'd pace?

But disobedience, like a blight,
Hath made us dwarfish in thy sight,
Nipt bud and blossom, leaf and shoot,
And robb'd thee of thy promis'd fruit.

And hence of word, of deed, of thought,
We to thy house no tithes have brought,
'Till, keeping back thy just demand,
We dwell as in a thirsty land.

Yet e'en from us, so far aloof,
Thy goodness deigns to challenge proof;
Still thou art calling for thine own,
Only to make Thy bounty shown.

Your tithes into my storehouse bring,
Confess me as your Priest and King;
The riches of my grace shall prove
The plenitude of pardoning love.

Heav'n's windows I will open wide,
Pour blessings down on every side,
'Till, in your overflowing store,
Your hearts can find no room for more.

Such *was* the challenge from on high,
Of Him whose word can never lie;
Not only, Lord! that word renew,
But give the faith to prove it true.

A REFLECTION.

Oh! were I borne in spirit to the time
  Which *now* the progress of my task hath won;
That era long foretold by seers sublime,
  When, born of woman, God's incarnate Son
Came to atone for folly, sin, and crime,
  And ransom man, without his aid undone;
Fulfilling in himself each sign and rite,
And making known his gospel's glorious light!

Who, plac'd on such ideal eminence,—
  But many a thoughtful glance must round him cast?
Viewing, as with an eye of faith intense,
  Now the more shadowy glories of the past,
Sublimely grand in dark magnificence,
  And splendidly imposing to the last;—
Then, turning from them, trembling, to survey
The gentler dawning of the gospel day.

In calm effulgence rises Bethlehem's Star
  Over the yet untravell'd holy ground;
There Calv'ry's hill uplifts its Cross afar,
  As with a diadem of brightness crown'd,
Majestic beauty! with no cloud to mar,
  Like those which hover'd Sinai's heights around:—
And here the Mount of Olives to the sky
Uprears its leafy coronal on high.

How lovely, yet how solemn is the scene!
  Scene worthy of the truths which wait us there;
And hark! the silent intervals between,
  In silvery tones float on the midnight air,
Glad songs that hail the new-born Nazarene!
  Songs in which angel hosts with transport share:
Such as no more shall fall on mortal ears,
Till heavenly music shall untune the spheres.

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

"And lo, the star which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was."—Matthew, ii. 9.

BRIGHT in the eastern firmament
The star upon the Magi smil'd;
Before them in their progress went,
And led them to the Heavenly Child.

Had fear or doubt their hearts assail'd,
Had they refus'd to follow on,
Little to them it had avail'd
That thus before their steps it shone.

But when its glory they espied,
Their hearts rejoic'd that star to greet;
And, trusting in their heavenly guide,
It led them to the Saviour's feet.

Nor need we vainly envy them;
Still shines within a Heavenly Light,
Which, like the Star of Bethlehem,
Would guide our onward course aright.

But if, when we that Light discern,
We doubt its mission is divine,
And from its guidance coldly turn,
Can we expect it still to shine?

Those who thus venture to reject
What none too gratefully could prize,
Too late may mourn that long neglect
Has veil'd its glory from their eyes.

But they who, following on, adore
The Giver of its guiding ray,
Shall find it shine yet more and more,
Unto the pure and perfect day.

THE FIRST BEATITUDE.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."—Matthew, v. 3.

WOULD'ST thou share this benediction,
Things of time surpassing far,
First be taught by truth's conviction
Who the poor in spirit are.

In the sight of fortune's minions
They are worthless, mean, and low;
In their own severe opinions
Of themselves far worse they know.

In the world's cold estimation
Undeserving of esteem;—
In their self-humiliation
Such unto themselves they seem.

But let truth extend thy vision
Through this fleeting span of time,
Their's will be, by sure decision,
Wealth exhaustless, joys sublime.

Watchful, patient, meek, and lowly,
Wise—in wisdom from above,
In their life and converse holy,
Full of faith, and full of love;

Grateful, *here*, to be cross-bearers,
For the Saviour's sake, they live;
And, *hereafter*, shall be wearers
Of the crowns that He will give.

Such, alone, the poor in spirit!
Heirs, through faith, of things divine;
And the kingdom they inherit,
Faith like their's must render thine.

AS UNTO GOD, NOT UNTO MAN.

"Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you they have their reward."
—Matthew, vi. 16.

WHEN thou a fast wouldst keep,
Make not its homage cheap,
By publishing its signs to every eye;
But let it be between
Thyself and THE UNSEEN;
So shall it gain acceptance from on high.

God will no rival brook!
Austere, or mournful look,
Meant human eye to catch, or heart to move:
Seeking but man's applause,
Glory from God withdraws,—
Treason His Spirit sternly will reprove.

From inward exercise,
At seasons, will arise
Dark clouds, which cast their shadow on the brow;
Yet darker to impart,
Shows a divided heart,
Which makes the world a witness of its vow.

Nor think in fasts alone,
The precept here made known,
Instruction to the Christian's heart should teach:
In alms, in prayer, in praise—
A lesson it conveys,
'Twere wise to learn, and good to feel in each.

Doth it not tend to show
That *all* which seeks below
The glory and reward it most desires,
Howe'er on earth esteem'd,
Will not by God be deem'd
That homage of the heart which he requires.

SINGLENESS OF EYE.

"The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."—Matthew, vi. 22.

His that single eye shall be,
Who but looks to Christ alone;
Trusting through his power to see
Truths discern'd not by his own.

Not by fancy's roving sight,
Not by reason's glance of pride,
Is beheld that holier Light
Which should be the Christian's guide.

This the aid of grace divine
Must unto the soul display;
And within the heart must shine
Its illuminating ray.

He who would that ray discern,—
  He who would its guidance share,
Inward must his vision turn,
  Wait and watch its rising there.

Unto him it shall arise,
  As the day from darkness springs.
Brighter far than morning's skies,
  Bearing healing on its wings.

His shall be faith, joy, and love,
  His—the arm of heavenly might;
His—the vision from above;
  His—"the body full of light."

Such the blessings Christ will give,
  Those who in his power abide,
Seeking but in Him to live
  Simple-hearted, single-eyed!

TRUST IN PROVIDENCE.

"Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."— Matthew, vi. 32.

LORD! when we seek thy throne of grace
To crave a blessing there,
O let not earthly things have place,
Unduly, in our prayer.

To know that 'tis thy bounteous hand
Our daily bread bestows;
To feel it is from thy command
Each added blessing flows;

This we may humbly know, and feel,
But let not worldly store
One thought excite which would reveal
A craving thirst for more.

Thou knowest well what things we need;
Oh, give us faith to see
That *such* necessities can plead
Their own brief wants with Thee.

But teach us in the solemn hour
  Of supplication, still
Simply to crave of Thee the power
  To do thy holy will.

To feel that thy protecting care
  From evil is our shield;
To see, in dark temptation's snare,
  Thy arm for us reveal'd;

To know thy kingdom here on earth
  Within our hearts increase,
And prove the all-surpassing worth
  Of thy pure gift of peace;—

Be such our prayers! For all beside
  Thy word a pledge shall be,
For Thou hast promis'd to provide
  For all who follow Thee.

HEIGHTS AND DEPTHS.

"But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day."—Matthew, xxiv. 20.

THOSE who have watch'd the changeful forms
Of clouds and sunshine, calms and storms,
Unto the christian pilgrim known,
Will often make this prayer their own.

Dark hours there are of doubt and fear,
With scarce one ray of light to cheer,
When hope appears for ever fled,
And every holy feeling dead.

When gourds we rear'd around us die,
And winter rules o'er earth and sky;
'Till languishing for happier bowers,
We wish the dove's fleet pinions our's.

Yet perilous our flight might be,
If at such seasons we could flee;
Safer it is to seek, by prayer,
The root within, and center there.

Hours, too, there are, more blest and bright,
When all around, above, seems light;
Moments, whose influence can impart
A sabbath feeling to the heart.

In that sweet sabbath of the soul,
We think we near our heavenly goal;
And, too impatient of delay,
Our thoughts would soar from earth away.

Yet, in such thought-transporting thrill,
Wisdom's safe watch-word is, "Be still!"
Dwell deep in faith, trust not to sight,
Nor venture on unbidden flight.

O Lord! in each extreme we know,
Thy will, our only signal, show;
In heights, in depths, be Thou our stay,
In winter, or in sabbath day.

PROGRESSIVE GROWTH.

"First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."
—Mark, iv. 28.

FAITH must anoint the eye to see;
Love the awaken'd heart must warm;
Grace must from sin's dominion free;
And growth in grace the saint must form.

For by degrees the work of God
Is in the heart of man reveal'd;—
There, first, conviction's chast'ning rod
That desert makes a furrow'd field.

Prepar'd for culture from on high,
There grace divine the seed must sow;
And there, uprising to the eye,
The blade must first its greenness show.

That blade which, warm'd by light and love,
  Water'd by dews of reverent fear,
Aspiring to its source above,
  Shall bear the yet unripen'd ear.

And, lastly, must the ear, matur'd,
  The fulness of its corn possess,
Ere in the garner safe secur'd
  The Husbandman his toil may bless.

Such is the gradual growth of grace;
  And those who well the work survey,
In each successive stage may trace,
  Abundant cause for such delay.

Who can at once deliverance gain
  From all that has enslav'd, enticed?
Or hope abruptly to attain
  The stature of a man in Christ?

THE TERMS OF DISCIPLESHIP.

"Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."— Mark, viii. 34.

THE terms are set before thee,
The path a Saviour trod;
No other can restore thee
To favour with thy God.

The way of self-denial,
The world's contemptuous frown,
The cross's fearful trial,—
Are preludes to the crown.

Christ suffer'd these to save thee,
Each in its worst degree;
Oh, let them not out-brave thee,
His lowly follower be.

Though trustless and unsteady,
Thou know'st thy feeble heart,
A Saviour's love is ready
Assistance to impart.

Though many a sore transgression
Upon thy conscience lie,
A Saviour's intercession
May plead for thee on high.

If thou, in deep repentance,
Wilt bow before His love,
Thy sins,—their fearful sentence,
Are blotted out above.

If thou, thyself denying,
Thy cross for Him wilt wear,
His grace, its aid supplying,
Thy crown will yet prepare.

But if thou slight His offers,
Thy life is but a breath,
Nor can wealth's richest coffers
Redeem thy soul from death!

ASPIRATIONS AFTER FAITH.

"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."—Mark, ix. 24.

What prayer can conscious weakness frame,
God more delights to bless,
Than that which, making faith its aim,
Yet mourns its faithlessness?

Are there not, Lord, who would believe
The power thy word imparts,
Who often would that power receive,
With joyful, grateful hearts;

But unbelief comes in to blight
Thy harvest in the soul,
And o'er thy holy, heavenly light
The clouds of doubt to roll?

Nor is it strange it should be thus;
Inscrutable thy ways,
Which he whose reason would discuss,
But finds an endless maze.

To such what prayer can thought accord
More simple, humble, brief?
Than crying—"I believe, O Lord!
Help thou mine unbelief."

This is that lowly frame of mind,
To which thy gracious will
The blessed promise once assign'd,
Thy power would yet fulfil:

That all is possible to him
Who full belief can own;
Whose eye, through faith, no longer dim,
Is fix'd on Thee alone.

ONE THING WANTING.

"Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest,"—Mark, x. 21.

THERE yet are many such
Who keep in good degree the moral law;
Whose hearts have felt the touch
Of love divine which unto Christ would draw.

On whom a gracious Lord
Hath look'd with love which should their souls enthral;
To whom he would accord
The power to follow Him, forsaking all.

But, when the terms they hear,
They turn reluctant, sorrowful, away;
Something is still too dear,
For them such hard conditions to obey.

No common impulse mov'd
A proselyte so ardent, blameless, true;
Jesus beheld, and lov'd!
Yet the inquirer mournfully withdrew.

Withdrew, no more, perchance,
To hear those winning accents; or to see
That eye's persuasive glance,
Whose language said, "Leave all, and follow me!"

Oh, ye, who, like this youth,
In spirit have with the Redeemer met,
Believe the voice of Truth,
Pleading in love, "One thing is lacking yet."

Forfeit not heavenly bliss,
Whate'er of earthly good your own ye call;
But know, that, lacking this,
Death will o'ertake you destitute of all!

PROMPT FORGIVENESS ENJOINED.

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any."—Mark, xi. 25.

WAIT not until prayer be ended,
To forgive thy direst foe;
With thy prayer be *pardon* blended,
If forgiveness thou wouldst know:
From this precept shouldst thou start,
Thine is not a praying heart.

Praying hearts can never cherish
Thoughts of bitterness, or strife;
In their presence soon must perish
Prayer's true element, and life:
If from faith thy prayer up-springs,
Love must lend it heaven-ward wings.

Shouldst thou, then, in thy devotion,
Feel against thy brother aught,
Instantly, with deep emotion,
Check each unforgiving thought;
While thy heart resentment bears,
God will never hear thy prayers.

Neither think thou of delaying;
Hatred on delay can live;—
Even while thou standest praying,
Freely, heartily forgive;
Or, whate'er thy sins may be,
Hope not God will pardon thee.

Should thy resolution falter,
Hatred has thy heart defil'd;
Leave thy gift before the altar,
First to man be reconcil'd,—
Then, forgiveness having shown,
Pray, that it may be thine own.

WATCHFULNESS IMPERATIVE ON ALL.

"And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."— Mark. xiii. 37.

ART thou a sinner, from the sleep
Which ends in death awaking?
Be rous'd this holy watch to keep,
Through grace thy sins forsaking.

Have growing light and added power
Been unto thee extended?
Forsake not thou thy fortress-tower,
Nor deem the watch suspended.

Only while vigilance is thine,
Canst thou expect the blessing
Their Lord and Master will assign
To pilgrims *onward* pressing.

Art thou a saint, by grace redeem'd,
Through Christ's atoning merit?
Be not the watch-word disesteem'd,
If life thou would'st inherit.

The higher ground thou may'st have gain'd,
  Its counsel more is needed;
Nor can thy safety be maintain'd,
  The watch-tower left unheeded.

In light or darkness, joy or woe,
  By good or ill surrounded,
Thy hope of conquest o'er each foe
  On watchfulness is founded.

Not in the wisdom, or the might
  Of man,—for these will fail thee,
When powers of darkness, born of night,
  In conflict shall assail thee.

The watchfulness that slumbers not
  Must be through grace imparted;
By faith and prayer it is begot,
  And saves the simple-hearted.

RETIREMENT AND PRAYER.

"And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed."—Luke, v. 16.

If thus our Lord himself withdrew,
Stealing at times away,
E'en from the lov'd, the chosen few,
In solitude to pray,
How should his followers, frail and weak,
Such seasons of retirement seek.

Seldom amid the strife and din
Of sublunary things,
Can spirits keep their watch within,
Or plume their heaven-ward wings;
He must dwell deep, indeed, whose heart
Can thus fulfil true wisdom's part.

Not in our own spontaneous will
  Can we the world shut out,—
Say to our passions, "Peace, be still!"
  Or check each rising doubt;
Alone, by prayer, 'tis slowly won,
In the world's throng too rarely done.

How needful is it, then, for man
  From things of time to steal,
Those of eternity to scan,
  Their magnitude to feel:—
The first are transitory, vain;
The last for ever will remain.

Retirement must adjust the beam,
  And prayer must poise the scales;
Our Guide, Example, Head supreme,
  In neither lesson fails;
Oh, may we in remembrance bear,
He sought retirement,—practis'd prayer!

A CHRISTIAN'S REJOICING.

"Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."—Luke, x. 20.

REJOICE not, or rejoice with awe,
That subject spirits own your law;
That powers of darkness, wont to be
Your masters,—from your presence flee.

If such dominion foster pride,
With instant danger 'tis allied;
If meekly held, obey the voice
Which bids you tremblingly rejoice.

When call'd to meet your foes in fight,
'Tis good to feel your Saviour's might;
For victory grateful thanks may rise,
But truest bliss still deeper lies.

The joy of heaven is *perfect* joy,
Which fear nor danger can alloy;—
The purest man on earth can know
From love and gratitude must flow.

If faith a humble hope supply,
Thy name is register'd on high,
Though in no robe of triumph clad,
Rejoice, and be exceeding glad.

The power which fallen spirits dread,
Which can on serpents, scorpions, tread,
Such powers, could we command at will,
Yield but the joy of conflict still.

This latent perils may allure,
The hope of heaven is peaceful, pure;
If faith this hope to thee assign,
Rejoice in Him who made it thine.

WAITING IN READINESS.

"Let your loins also be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord."—Luke, xii. 35, 36.

GOOD is it thus to wait;
And joy shall be to them assign'd,
Whose hearts in such prepar'd estate,
Their Lord shall haply find.

With lights that shine and burn,
Girded in spirit, void of fear,
These shall their Lord's approach discern.
Rejoicing He is near.

Wisdom nor strength of ours
Can thus enable us to stand;
O Lord, thy grace alone empowers
To keep thy high command.

Thy Spirit's aid must gird
Our loins for thy approach divine;
Our lamps with oil, by Thee conferr'd,
Alone can burn or shine.

Then grant thy heavenly aid,
That, when thy presence we must meet,
With rev'rent hearts, but undismay'd,
Thy coming we may greet.

CALLED, BUT NOT CHOSEN.

"For I say unto you, that none of these men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."—Luke, xiv. 24.

"PRECEPT on precept, line on line,"
The gospel's hallow'd page imparts.
Fraught with intelligence divine
To humble and obedient hearts.

Teaching, not only that the call
Of love divine hath been made known,
Appealing tenderly to all,
Whether, or not, its voice they own;

But proving, truth beyond all price,
If wisely learnt, and timely weigh'd.
Even that call will not suffice,
Unless by man it be *obeyed.*

Are there not those who oft have heard
This call their waken'd hearts within,
Who still obedience have deferr'd,—
Wedded to earth—enslav'd by sin ?

Before it be too late, O Lord !
Plead with us, though in judgment—plead,
That self and sin must be abhorr'd,
Ere at thy table we can feed.

Show that it can avail us nought,
But must our condemnation be,
To have been call'd, yet thereby brought
No nearer unto heaven and Thee.

Bring home the mournful language us'd
Here of each disobedient guest,
Who, call'd,—yet pray'd to be excus'd,
And, bidden, yet remain'd unblest.

A WORD OF CAUTION.

"Remember Lot's wife."—Luke, xvii. 32.

HERE, he who runs may plainly read.
How little can a call avail;
How easy is it to proceed
Some steps aright, and yet to fail.

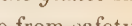
How was she call'd! nay, led perforce
By guides commission'd from on high;
Who pointed out her onward course,
Commanding her for life to fly.

To fly, nor once look back to trace
The righteous vengeance of the Lord,
Which, on the accurs'd and guilty place,
Destruction's fiery flood out-pour'd.

Thou who hast heard a voice within,
Bidding thee fly, nor look behind;
If tempted to look back on sin,
Bear this example in thy mind.

When but allur'd *in thought* to dwell
On scenes thought should indulge no more,
Recall the doom on her which fell,
And loathe what thou hast lov'd before.

Remember, for *the glance* she turn'd
To sin's abode from safety's path;
God, whose commandment she had spurn'd,
Made her a monument of wrath.



TO EACH HIS DUE.

"Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's."—Luke, xx. 25.

HAST thou unto superiors paid
The honour justly due?
To those in thy own sphere display'd
Love cordial, prompt, and true?

Hast thou to thy inferiors shown
The kindness they should claim,
Forborne all haughtiness of tone,
And each opprobrious name?

All this is well; but these alone
Can ne'er avail thee aught,
If to thy Maker's heavenly throne
No homage thou hast brought.

Or hast thou, in profession, been
A rigid devotee;
In public worship often seen
To bend the willing knee?

Faultless in every outward rite
Which marks discipleship,
And daily ready to recite
The homage of the lip?

Yet these combin'd, when most sincere,
Imperfectly fulfil
The holy law recorded here,
If love be wanting still.

The love of God must be the root
Of worship, praise, and prayer;
And love of man must be the fruit
Thy daily life should bear.

This tribute paid to each—will draw
A blessing from above;
And both combin'd fulfil the law
Of pure and perfect love.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

"And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not."—John, i. 5.

JUST picture of the human mind,
Yet unregenerate, unrefin'd,
Ere the bright Day-Spring from on high
Our mental vision can espy.

Such was the night which shrouded earth
When Godhead stoop'd to human birth;
When He, whose fiat worlds had fram'd,
Walk'd among men unknown, unnam'd!

As in His outward body, then,
He was rejected, scorn'd of men,
So in His inward coming now,
To Him we yet refuse to bow.

His heavenly light vouchsafes to shine
Within the heart's yet darken'd shrine,
But there, 'till grace hath life begot,
Our darkness comprehends it not.

But when his Spirit's quick'ning breath
Hath rous'd the heart, as if from death,
And given its powers a heaven-ward tone,
That heart becomes, indeed, His own!

To such he comes, a second time,
In Spirit, and in power sublime;
By them He is with joy receiv'd,
By them His holy name believ'd.

To those who thus believe, and live,
The claim of sonship He will give,
Through which they shall be born anew,
And prove His gracious promise true.

Then grant, O God of grace divine,
That in our hearts thy light may shine;
And bid those hearts be born again,
That there it may not shine in vain.

THE SPIRIT AND THE FLESH.

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."
—John, vi. 63.

If aught of flesh, or fleshly powers,
Thy kingdom, Lord, could win,
Then might we deem the glory ours,
And pride would enter in.

But Thy unchanging word hath shown
That these can nought avail,
That all which man can call his own
Must in this conflict fail.

And our experience proves it true,
Instructed, day by day,
How little all that we can do
Can help us on our way.

Thy Spirit's quick'ning aid must give
  The power to come to Thee,
The life whereby our souls must live,
  The light by which we see.

The gracious words thy lips have said,
  Are spirit, life indeed;
And Thou art still the living Bread,
  Whereon the soul must feed.

But those unto the fleshly heart,
  Nor life, nor spirit yield;
Nor wilt thou of thyself impart,
  Until by grace reveal'd.

Oh, give us, then, that heavenly grace,
  Through whose blest aid, alone,
Our souls the mysteries can trace,
  Thy living words make known.

TEARS.

"Jesus wept."—John, xi. 35.

NOT worthless are the tears,
When pure their fountain-head,
Which human hopes and fears
Compel us oft to shed.

In grief or joy they tell
Far more than words can teach;
Their silence hath a spell
Beyond the power of speech.

In joy, though bright and brief,
Its essence they make known;
And how they soften grief
The mourner's heart will own.

Yet tears there are which fall,
Claiming a holier birth;
Which come not at the call
Of time's brief woe or mirth.

Tears which are shed, alone,
For God's all-pard'ning love;
But to the mourner known,
And Him who dwells above.

Can there be drops more pure,
More precious, holy yet;
Whose record shall endure
'Till time's last sun be set?

Yes! Tears once fill'd His eye,
Beside a mortal's grave,
Who left his throne on high,
The lost to seek and save.

And fresh, from age to age,
Their memory shall be kept;
While man shall bless the page
Which tells that Jesus *wept!*

QUICKENED, BUT HELPLESS.

"And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go."—John, xi. 44.

Is it not thus, in spirit, to this day,
With souls whom thou, O Lord, hast call'd from death,
Who, powerless, helpless, fetter'd, thus obey
The summons of thy yet life-giving breath?

Are there not those who, as in graves have lain,
Dead to the life which Thou alone canst give,
Until thy Spirit has recall'd again
Their souls, as from the dead, and bade them live!

The voice hath been obey'd: obey'd so far,
That vital consciousness hath own'd thy will;
But much remains thy triumph yet to mar,
And death's enthralments keep us prisoners still.

Our grave-clothes cling around us; we are bound,
And blinded by the trappings worn so long;
Thy word once more must speak, and by its sound
Render the quicken'd, but still helpless strong.

Let not thy glorious work be incomplete;
Thyself our perfect Resurrection show,
And deign the gracious mandate to repeat,
Which then pronounc'd, "Loose him, and let him go."

PHILIP'S REQUEST.

"Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us."—John, xiv. 8.

HADST thou so long with Jesus been,
Beheld the mighty wonders done,
Yet ne'er through faith's strong vision seen
The Father dwelling in the Son?

Had not the dead been rais'd to life,
The lame, the blind, the deaf been heal'd?
Had not the waves' tumultuous strife,
Still'd by His voice, their Lord reveal'd?

The words He utter'd day by day,
  Could'st thou so darkly, dimly scan,
As not by glimpses to survey
  The Deity but veil'd in man?

Yet, who shall chide thee? Are not we
  Oft shadow'd by as dense a cloud,
As in that earlier day, from thee,
  Thy Lord's divinity could shroud?

The gospel page *without*, is spread,
  Revealing truths then dimly shown,
Ere Christ ascended from the dead,
  That man the Comforter might own.

Within the heart, his light and grace
  Would now reveal his glory there,
Making that heart his dwelling-place.
  A temple meet for praise and prayer.

But, like thyself, we would discern,
  By outward vision, One divine,
When holier faith would have us learn
  God's presence in his inward shrine.

Oh, may our hearts no longer wrong
  The gracious words that answer'd Thee! —
Have I been with you, then, so long,
  And ask ye yet your Lord to see?

THE BLESSED FAITH OF THE SAINTS.

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen *me*, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."—John, xx. 29.

MOMENTS there are, in which 'tis well
To prove the fleece, both wet, and dry;
On every point of proof to dwell,
And every argument to try.

But times and seasons, too, there are,
When faith, if genuine faith it be,
Will find that doubt belief must mar,
And may not wait, or ask *to see*.

Where earnest wishes to believe
Are felt,—though doubt's dark maze be trod,
Such may, through grace, at last receive,
The power to say, "My Lord! My God!"—

But wiser, and more blest, are they,
Whose faith has less distrustful been;
Whose hearts, believing, can obey,
Even before the eye hath seen.

This is that high and holy faith,
Which grace divine alone can give;
Triumphant over sin and death,
Through doubt and darkness it can live.

In every trying time of need
Its influence falters not, nor faints,
But proves itself, in truth and deed,
That once deliver'd to the saints.

Those, who, confiding in its might,
Place in this principle their trust,
Shall walk by faith, and not by sight,
And share the glory of the just.

And bless'd are they who thus receive
The power which God within makes known:
Who, not beholding, can believe,
And live by faith in Christ alone.

JUDAS ISCARIOT.

"For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry."—Acts, i. 17.

If it were so with Thee,
Thus number'd, gifted, and yet insecure,
Oh, how much need have we
To make our calling and election sure!

What station can we win,
To rival the high rank which thou hadst won,
Ere treach'ry's fearful sin
Made thee, by emphasis, "perdition's son?"

No follower of a day
Wert thou, no hasty proselyte to change;
That *such* should fall away,
Nor then, nor now, could seem a marvel strange.

But thou long time hadst been
One of the few so honour'd, and preferr'd;
Daily thy Lord hadst seen,
More often than the day his voice hadst heard.

Number'd among the elect,
Partaker in their ministry wert thou;—
How could that hand, uncheck'd,
Give to its thorny crown thy Master's brow?

There may be—in whose thought
Thy fall seems part of God's appointed plan;
Hence with no lesson fraught,
Which *every* heart with fearful awe should scan.

I dare not so discuss
Myst'ries which reason cannot penetrate;
Instructive, unto us,
Should be the lesson of thy fall'n estate.

Thou shouldst a watch-word be,—
A solemn and affecting one to ALL;
And, while we mourn for thee,
Each should remember—"I may also fall!"

PHILIP'S QUERY TO THE EUNUCH.

"Understandest thou what thou readest?"—Acts, viii. 30.

How needful the inquiry still,
When we consult the sacred page,
Wherein God's high and holy will
Is yet reveal'd from age to age.

'Tis well of our own hearts to ask,
If what we read we comprehend?
Or worse than profitless a task,
Which may to condemnation tend.

We must not by our powers as men
Expect those oracles to know;
Or fathom, by our reason's ken,
The mighty depths conceal'd below.

Nor should we, with inactive mind,
Too much on others' aid rely,—
Trusting, like him of old, to find
Some Philip opportunely nigh.

In humble faith, with watchful prayer,
Dig for thyself within that mine;
God's holy grace must guide thee there,
And make its hidden treasures thine.

The Spirit, which gave Scripture birth,
Must yet interpret it to man,
Or much of its divinest worth
Dimly and darkly he must scan.

But, open'd by that heavenly key,
Which turns at God's divine command,
The eye its mysteries can see,—
The heart its truths can understand.

PRAYER FOR HELP IN PRAYER.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." —Romans, viii. 26.

INTERCESSOR! thron'd on high,
Unto man thine aid supply;
By thy influence still prepare
Humble hearts for holy prayer.

Dove-like, from on high, descend,
With our thoughts and feelings blend,
And the shadow of thy wing
O'er our suppliant spirits fling.

Lend to our infirmities
Living help, which grace supplies;
Thou, alone, canst teach alway
What to pray for,—how to pray.

Nor alone instruct us how
At the throne of grace to bow;
Far beyond our fervent prayer,
Be thyself our Pleader there.

Thy blest ministry fulfil,
Prove our Intercessor still;
Thy unutterable groans
Far transcend all mortal tones.

Known to Him that searcheth hearts
Every prayer thy aid imparts;
Thought and speech of ours may err,
Be thou their Interpreter.

Where our thoughts amiss would plead,
For their errors intercede;
And, where words of ours are vain,
May Thy groans acceptance gain.

HUMILITY AND FEAR EXPEDIENT.

"Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear."—Romans, xi. 20.

HAST thou, by heavenly grace benign,
From the wild olive-tree,
Been grafted on th' immortal Vine?
Yet fearful, lowly be.—

Rememb'ring this—that He, who gave
Thy honour'd station there,
Must bid thy bough in greenness wave,
And teach it fruit to bear.

Have others, native to the stem,
Been broken off, as sere?
Exult not proudly over them,
But view thyself with fear.

Think not that He, who look'd for fruit
  Upon the native bough,
Will, in his own engrafted shoot,
  Of barrenness allow.

Thou wast there grafted to bring forth,
  In these degenerate days,
Rich fruitage of immortal worth,
  To His eternal praise.

By faith thou standest; and they fell
  Because of unbelief;
If doubt or pride in thee should dwell,
  Thy date, like theirs, is brief.

He, who the native branches smote,
  Though merciful, is just;
He thy unfruitfulness will note,
  And lay thee in the dust.

A CALL TO VIGILANCE.

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."—Romans, xiii. 12.

SAVIOUR, and GOD! impress on all
This awful portion of thy word;
Bring home its solemn, fearful call,
To hearts that have too long demurr'd.

If, in the fancied shades of night,
Our souls have trusted,—Oh, display
The dawning of that heavenly light,
Which ushers in thy cloudless day!

If deeds of darkness we have done,
While night yet hover'd round our path,
Teach us hereafter such to shun,
Dreading thy day of righteous wrath.

The night far spent, the day at hand,
Rouse us by thy life-giving breath;
That we before Thee yet may stand,
Nor sleep the awful sleep of death.

Convince us, if we hope to be
Accepted, in thy holy sight;
Our spirits must be cloth'd by Thee,
In thy whole armoury of light.

Nor less the needful truth make known,
That none can be with *this* supplied,
Unless all armour of our own,
Trusted no more, be laid aside.

For none thy panoply can wear,
But those whom Thou hast first uncloth'd;
And none thy cloudless day can bear,
But those who sin's dark night have loath'd.

THE APOSTLE'S KNOWLEDGE.

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."—1 Corinthians, ii. 2.

WOULDST thou of knowledge, more and more,
The sum and substance gain,—
Adding to mind's immortal store,
The wealth that shall remain?—

O search not, with the learned Greek,
In earthly wisdom's mine;
Nor, like the Jew, this treasure seek
In outward rite or sign.

But seek thou, as th' Apostle sought,
What far surpasseth show,
In speech, in action, and in thought,
Christ crucified to know.

This saving knowledge would'st thou learn.
From human lore conceal'd,
Thy thought and vision *inward* turn,
For there it is reveal'd.

There would the Lord anoint thine eye,
His glorious cross to see,
Which *to the world* can crucify,
The world, no less, *to Thee.*

His Spirit's deep baptismal power
Must aid that cross to bear ;
So shalt thou, in a future hour,
The crown of glory wear.

For God will, in the end, bestow
That crown on none beside
Those, who, like Paul, but seek to know
Christ, and him crucified !

PRESENT VISION IMPERFECT.

"For now we see through a glass darkly."—1 Corinthians, xiii. 12.

DIM and dark our present vision,
Through time's shadowy glass made known.
When compar'd with views elysian,
Which hereafter shall be shown.

Yet enough of glory,—beauty,—
Here to faith's keen sight are given,
To refresh the path of duty,
And make glad the way to heaven.

See we not, beyond the portal
Of the grave's brief resting-place,
Glimpses of those joys immortal,
Which await the heirs of grace?

Hear we not, at seasons stealing
On the spirit's wakeful ear,
Songs of praise, their bliss revealing,
Who once mourn'd and suffer'd here?

Feel we not, at times, in sorrow—
Hopes whereon the heart can stay,
Prescient of a brighter morrow,
Which shall chase all griefs away!

Oh! if such the hopes attendant,
While we dimly, darkly see,
How unspeakably transcendant,
Must the full fruition be;—

When, eternity unfolding,
All the ransom'd hosts above,
Face to face their Lord beholding,
Join in songs of praise and love.

THE EARTHY AND THE HEAVENLY.

"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."—1 Corinthians, xv. 45.

CAN we, in our final change,
Hope this transformation strange,
If we know not, ere that hour,
Grace's renovating power?

If we bear about us still,
Earthy image, carnal will;
When the final trump shall sound,
Earthy we must still be found.

Flesh and blood cannot inherit
Kingdom of th' immortal Spirit;
Nor can souls corrupt through sin,
Incorruption hope to win.

Wouldst thou, then, hereafter be
From the earthy image free,
Christ thy spirit must prepare
One more heavenly here to bear.

Who such impress would entrust
To the grave's unconscious dust,
Heedless, until life be done,
If the work have been begun?

Seek, oh, seek, ere life shall close,
Him whose Spirit power bestows!
Crave of Him that power to give,
Die to self, through Him to live.

They who *thus* their Lord have known,
Shall his resurrection own;
And their death, when they must die,
Be absorb'd in victory.

Victory over all of earth,
Which once gave its likeness birth,
Conquest won by Him, whose grace
Stamp'd *His* image in its place.

A CHRISTIAN'S SAVOUR.

"For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish."—2 Corinthians, ii. 15.

MAN cannot of himself impart
This privilege divine,
Unto his own corrupted heart;
The work, O Lord, is thine.

Nor can he unto others' sense
That savour e'er make known,
Unless thy Spirit first dispense
Its virtue to his own.

He who another would invite
The rose's sweets to share,
Must, even though conceal'd from sight,
A rose about him bear.

How can the blind expect to teach
The eye aright to see?
Or how, in eloquence of speech,
The dumb instructors be?

Nor can our unregenerate powers
That boon diffuse around,
Which Jesus first must render ours,
'Till we in Him are found.

Lord! by thy Spirit, then, create
Our hearts in Him anew;
Restore us from our fall'n estate,
Our souls with grace imbue.

That so our spirits may give forth
His savour far and nigh,
Of life—in them who feel its worth;
Of death—in them who die.

A CHRISTIAN'S FREEDOM.

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."—2 Corinthians, iii. 17.

SEEK'ST thou freedom, far more glorious
Than the hero ever found,
When, in battle-field victorious,
His the brow with laurel crown'd?

Know—a Spirit, ever nigh thee,
If His aid thou meekly crave,
With that freedom would supply thee,
Which no bondage can enslave.

Christ that Spirit still remaineth;
Liberty, which He would give,
Earthly thraldom ne'er enchaineth,
For in dungeons it can live.

Where his Spirit dwells—no token
Of earth's bondage can appal ;
Doors are open'd, chains are broken,—
Overthrown the prison wall.

These may, in the world's opinion,
Slavery's bitter doom fulfil ;
Christians, through their Lord's dominion,
Claim a glorious freedom still.

Freedom from each fatal error,
Freedom found and felt within ;
Freedom from the grave's dark terror ;
Freedom from the yoke of sin.

Where these are—oh, what are fetters,
Which the mortal body wears ?
What brief tyranny's abettors ?—
Objects of their love, and prayers !

OUR TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."—2 Corinthians. iv. 7.

WERE it not thus, how soon might we
Humility and fear disown;
And in Thy gifts our glory see,
When glory, Lord, is thine alone.

But Thou hast wisely seen it right,
In earthen vessels here to place
Thy own inshining gospel light,
The golden treasure of Thy grace.

That so each power's true excellence
May be of God, and not of man,
Humility to us dispense,
And magnify thy gospel's plan.

How gracious unto lost mankind,
The love which bade a gem so rare,
In such frail caskets be enshrin'd,
Till thou shouldst worthier ones prepare.

These earthen vessels, late or soon,
Shall in their native dust decay;
But thy imperishable boon
Shall long outlive their transient day.

The Spirit, earth's ethereal guest,
Whom thy inshining light hath led,
No more in fleshly garments drest,
Shall rise immortal from the dead.

And there, before Thy holy throne,
Shall yet more worthily employ
Those gifts, whose glory is thy own,
In songs of praise, and grateful joy.

A CAUTION AND PROMISE.

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."—Galatians, vi. 9.

He who would endless glory reap,
Must *here* the word of patience keep;
That word which gives the eye to see
The glorious harvest yet to be.

The husbandman, his seed who sows,
Must wait with patience while it grows:
And he who would the oak uprear,
Must cherish hope from year to year.

The architect who lays the while
The basement of a lofty pile,
By slow, laborious toil alone
Can reach the turret's topmost stone.

Nor must the Christian hope too soon,
Faith's more sublime, immortal boon;
None win by slight or brief emprize
The rich reversion of the skies.

Meek pilgrim Zion-ward! if thou
Hast put thy hand unto the plough,
O look not back, nor droop dismay'd,
At thought of recompense delay'd.

Shall he, who more than worlds is wooing,
Faint and grow weary in well-doing,
Who, in his Lord's appointed time,
Through faith may gain a meed sublime?

Doubt not that thou, in season due,
Shalt own his gracious promise true;
And thou shalt share their glorious lot
Whom doing well hath wearied not.

CHRISTIAN LOVE.

"And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Ephesians, iv. 32.

LORD! teach us more and more to feel,
All outward creeds and forms above,
That thy religion's stamp, and seal
Is pure, pervading, pardoning love.

Not earthly passion's ardent flame,
By bards in glowing numbers sung,
Whose brief, but thrilling transports claim
The aspirations of the young;—

Nor e'en affection's natural tie,
Of gentler feelings intertwin'd,
Which knits in tender sympathy
Heart unto heart; and mind to mind:—

But that more deep devotedness,
Thy Spirit, Lord, alone can give;
Whose power none truly can express
But those who in it move, and live.

This is the love which suffers long;
Prompt to forgive, and to forget
Each unprovok'd injurious wrong,
Rememb'ring its own holier debt.

For *they* can never vengeance take,
Or, harshly, others' faults condemn.
Who feel that God, for Jesu's sake,
Hath lov'd, and freely pardon'd them.

THE PEACE OF GOD.

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."—Philippians, iv. 7.

THOSE who live in love, shall know
This indwelling quiet joy,
Which the world can ne'er bestow,
Nor its sorrows e'er destroy;
Peace, which passeth understanding:—
Peace of God's divine commanding.

Earthly hopes but bloom to fade;
  Earthly pleasures turn to pain;
These, when in the balance weigh'd,
  Lighter than its dust remain;
And the peace that earth affordeth
Worthless is to him who hoardeth.

But the peace which God can give,
  Heart and mind preserveth still;
Teaching in his love to live,
  Trust his word, and do his will:
From above this peace descendeth,—
Towards its source it ever tendeth.

You, who would this treasure share,
  To the Saviour humbly go;
Crave of Him, in rev'rent prayer,
  What He only can bestow;
Christ, who humble prayer rewardeth,
To His own this peace accordeth.

A CHRISTIAN'S ASPIRATIONS.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."—"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."—Colossians, iii. 1 and 3.

ART thou risen with Christ?—Thy love
Must such resurrection show;
Seeking heavenly things above,
Slighting those of earth below.

Where the heart its hopes has stor'd,
Thither thought and feeling turn;
Thy allegiance to thy Lord
By this simple test discern.

If thy life be hid with Him,
If thy soul to sin be dead,
Earthly things to thee are dim,
Heaven-ward purer hopes have fled.

Shouldst thou not this state have won,
With thy Lord thou art not risen;
Still the work remains undone,
Earth is yet thy spirit's prison.

Is there aught too dear to give,
From such bondage to arise?
Die! if thou wouldst hope to live;
Give up earth—to gain the skies.

By that death, thou shalt attain
Life unfelt, unknown before;
By that sacrifice shalt gain
Treasure passing worldly store.

Thou shalt live by faith and love,—
Live in Him who died for thee;
And, in hopes which soar above,
Richer far than Dives be.

And when Christ, thy Life and Light,
In His glory shall appear,
Thou, accepted in His sight,
Shalt confess a Saviour near.

REJOICING AND PRAYER.

"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing."—1 Thessalonians, v. 16, 17.

How can we evermore rejoice,
In sorrow, care, and toil?
Or ceaseless prayer uplift its voice
Amid the world's turmoil!

Not of ourselves, can we command
This joy's unfailing lot;
Nor can our hearts themselves expand
In prayer which ceaseth not.

The power of faith, the aid of grace,
The Spirit must prepare,
Ere it can be the dwelling-place
Of constant joy and prayer.

But when prepar'd by power divine,
The heart, though vile before,
Becomes of ceaseless prayer the shrine.
Rejoiceth evermore.

Not *from* itself that gladness flows,
For it may often ache;
Yet, aching, can rejoice in woes
Endur'd for Jesu's sake.

Nor *in* itself, for one brief hour,
Dwells prayer's exhaustless gift,
The Saviour's name, the Spirit's power,
The soul must thus uplift.

Where these are known, nor grief, nor care,
Its hopes can e'er destroy;
Its vital breath is humble prayer;
Its life is grateful joy.

AN APOSTOLIC ASPIRATION.

"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."—2 Thessalonians, iii. 5.

LORD! teach our inward eye to see
The work must be by Thee begun;
Thy grace must guide to love of Thee,
And patient waiting for thy Son.

Though worthy of our love Thou art,
And Christ of patient waiting for;
The carnal, unregenerate heart,
That love, that waiting—must abhor.

Because its feelings, thoughts, and will,
At enmity with Thee remain;
And, in that enmity, must still
A lowly Saviour's yoke disdain.

But Thine the power to overthrow
Each hostile feeling, will, and thought,
And hearts, by Thee directed, know
These into meek subjection brought.

Oh, thus *direct*, and deal with ours!
Our spirits by thy grace prepare;
And render man's regenerate powers
Worthy a Saviour's yoke to bear.

Beget within our hearts that love
For Thee—Thou only canst create;
And, through thy Spirit from above,
Instruct us for thy Son to wait.

HONOUR AND GLORY TO GOD.

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."—1 Timothy. i. 17.

KING of kings! O teach us how
We before Thee ought to bow:
Not alone on bended knee,
Should we offer praise to Thee;
May Thy grace to us impart,
Prostrate spirit, humbled heart.

King Eternal! O prepare
Us eternity to share:
By thy Spirit's influence *here,*
Keep us in thy holy fear,
That, *hereafter,* ours may be
Bless'd eternity with Thee.

King Immortal! through thy Son
Immortality is won:
Give us faith in Him, that we
Over death may victors be;
And, accepted for His sake,
May to endless life awake.

King Invisible! supply
Sight unto that inward eye,
Which should look on "things unseen,"
But by sin hath darken'd been;
Thou canst cause the blind to see,
Ope that eye to look on Thee.

Lord of lords! and King of kings!
Heaven's high vault with praises rings;
Should not man *on earth* proclaim
Honour, glory, to Thy name,
If, when he from earth shall sever,
These he would ascribe for ever?

A CHRISTIAN'S DEVOTEDNESS.

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."
—2 Timothy, ii. 4.

He who would win a warrior's fame,
Must shun, with ever watchful aim,
  Entangling things of life;
His couch the earth, heaven's arching dome
His airy tent,—his only home
  The field of martial strife.

Unwearied by the battle's toil,
Uncumber'd by the battle's spoil,
  No dangers must affright;
Nor rest seduce to slothful ease;
Intent alone his Chief to please,
  Who call'd him forth to fight.

Soldier of Christ, if thou wouldst be
Worthy that epithet, stand free
From time's encumb'ring things;
Be earth's enthralments fear'd, abhorr'd;
Knowing thy Leader is the Lord,
Thy Chief the King of kings.

Still use, as not abusing, all
Which fetters worldlings by its thrall;—
With fame, with power, with pelf,
With joy or grief, with hope or fear,
Whose origin and end are *here*,
Entangle not thyself.

These close enough will round thee cling,
Without thy tight'ning every string
Which binds them to thy heart:—
Despise them not! this thankless were,
But, while partaking them, prepare
From each and all to part.

CHRISTIAN PURITY.

"Unto the pure all things are pure."—Titus, i. 15.

Oh, for that purity of heart!
The gospel only can impart
To those who gratefully receive
Its teachings, and its word believe.

This is the purity, whose power,
In dark temptation's trying hour,
Can still unchangeably endure,
And pure itself, make all things pure.

Stainless appears the mountain's snow,
Transparent seems the brook below;
Taintless the opening flower,—the dew
Which gems it—as unsullied too.

But rains soon dim the mountain hoar,
The troubled stream runs clear no more,
The flow'ret in the dust is soil'd,
The dew-drop by the sun despoil'd.

Does purity adorn with grace
The happy infant's smiling face?
It does,—and cold their hearts must prove,
Who look not on such face with love.

Yet mountain snows, and chrystal streams,
And flowers which ope to morn's bright beams,
And dew-drops—which those sun-beams dry,
Are types of *nature's* purity.

While that which God alone can give,
Life's shifting changes shall outlive,
And give "the pure in heart," through grace,
To see their Maker face to face.

A CHRISTIAN'S PLEADING.

"Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ."—Philemon, 8 and 9.

STATESMEN have pleaded—for applause,
And some for sordid pelf;
The patriot—for his country's cause;
The lover—for himself.

But statesman, patriot, lover—ne'er,
In passion, or pretence,
Appeal'd to heart, or eye, or ear,
With deeper eloquence,

Than these few simple words make known
To those who feel their force,
Whose eyes can see, whose hearts can own
Their pure and holy source.

What is that source? A heart renew'd
By grace, from God above;
With meekness, gentleness imbued,
And taught to win by love.

Which, govern'd not by studied rules
That human art may frame,—
Trusts not the rhet'ric of its schools,
But pleads a Saviour's name.

And, for His sake thus bound in chains,
With tenderness can greet,
Him whom it might *command*, but deigns
So mildly to entreat.

Oh ye! who may aspire in thought,
To act the pleader's part,
Deign by a Christian to be taught
The way to touch the heart.

THE REWARD OF THE FAITHFUL.

"There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God."—Hebrews, iv. 9.

MEEK follower of a lowly Lord,
Are trouble, fear, and sorrow, thine?
May humble faith to thee accord
This promise of His word divine:
For HIS a glorious rest remaineth,
And stedfast faith that rest attaineth.

Art thou of holy grace a child?
This world thy rest can never be;
By sorrow marr'd, by sin defil'd,
It is a home unworthy thee;
And thou shalt be by grace translated,
Where peace and purity are mated.

But, oh, remember, those alone
His hallow'd rest shall enter in,
Whose hearts, *believing*, first disown
The pride of self, the power of sin:
If thou into His rest wouldst enter,
Faith must achieve this high adventure.

Faith in the Son of God—who gave
His sinless life to ransom thine;
Faith in God's gracious will to save,
Faith in His Spirit's aid divine;
Thine eye by faith that rest beholdeth,
And faith its entrance still unfoldeth.

Possessing this—thy soul shall be
Prepar'd with every ill to cope,
And Achor's valley prove to thee
The door of calm confiding hope;
Of hope which—on a Saviour grounded,
Though tried, can never be confounded.

THE WISDOM FROM ABOVE.

"But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."—James, iii. 17.

HAST thou this wisdom from above,
Pure, gentle, peaceable, divine?
Examine well thy faith and love,
And know if it indeed be thine.

Hath grace thy heart so purified,
That no unclean, unholy thing
Can there uncheck'd, unmourn'd abide,
To taint thought's deep and hidden spring?

Peaceable, and at peace within;
Gentle, and easy of access
To all intreaty—not of sin;
And full of mercy, prompt to bless;

Known by good fruits, faith's genuine test,
  Impartial, upright, and sincere;
If such in thee be manifest,
  The wisdom from above is near.

Such is its influence o'er the heart,
  Thus is its presence ever known;
But only God can these impart,
  And all their glory is his own.

Hast thou by grace this wisdom won?
  Watch o'er thy thoughts, thy words, thy ways:
And, in the Spirit, through his Son,
  Give God the honour and the praise.

THE TRANSITORY AND THE ENDURING.

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever."—1 Peter, i. 24, 25.

All flesh is but as grass!
Man's glory, like the flower of grass, must fade.
When clouds shall o'er it pass,
And veil its transient loveliness in shade.

Does this apply alone
To these material tenements of clay?
Alas! its truth is shown
In gifts and graces perishing as they.

Power, knowledge, fame, and wealth,
Are, in themselves, as insecure and frail
As comeliness, or health,
Which ere the morrow stern disease may quail.

Then boast not, worm of earth!
Even those gifts and graces of the mind,
Which claim a loftier birth
Than unto grosser matter seems assign'd.

The power of thought, of feeling,
Fancy, imagination,—trust them not;
Howe'er to pride appealing,
All these may, with thy memory, be forgot.

If such *thy* glory are,
God can o'erthrow them in their zenith's pride.
And will their beauty mar,
Except His grace their use has sanctified!

His holy word, alone,
Remains unchang'd, and ever shall endure;
Himself the Corner-Stone
On which that hope is rear'd, which standeth sure.

THE LAST DAY.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."—2 Peter, iii. 10.

WHETHER this solemn day may come,
Ere time to us shall be no more,
To man all oracles are dumb,
Nor need we ignorance deplore.

Enough for us to know and feel,
When we our fleeting years have past,
A day must come—our lot to seal,
A day, an hour—to *us* THE LAST!

When outward heaven, and outward earth,
We must forego, with things of time;
And death must be the awful birth
Of an eternity sublime.

Prepare us, Lord, to meet that day,
Which, soon or late, we all must greet;
When we thy summons must obey,
And stand before thy judgment-seat.

So purify our hearts from sin,
That we may seek, nor seek in vain,
For brighter heavens, new earth—wherein
Thy glorious righteousness shall reign.

Where sun nor moon shall more display
Vicissitude of day or night,
But Thou wilt be our endless day,
The Lamb our everlasting light.

WALKING IN THE LIGHT.

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John, i. 7.

Walk in the light! So shalt thou know
That fellowship of love,
His Spirit only can bestow,
Who reigns in light above.

Walk in the light!—and sin, abhorr'd,
Shall ne'er defile again;
The blood of Jesus Christ, thy Lord,
Shall cleanse from every stain.

Walk in the light!—and thou shalt find
Thy heart made truly His,
Who dwells in cloudless light enshrin'd,
In whom no darkness is.

Walk in the light!—and thou shalt own
Thy darkness pass'd away,
Because that Light hath on thee shone
In which is perfect day.

Walk in the light!—and e'en the tomb
No fearful shade shall wear;
Glory shall chase away its gloom,
For CHRIST hath conquer'd there!

Walk in the light!—and thine shalt be
A path, though thorny, bright;
For GOD, by grace, shall dwell in Thee,
And GOD himself is LIGHT!

THE GENUINE LOVE OF CHRIST.

"And this is love, that we walk after his commandments."—
2 John, 6.

THE surest proof of love, is not
Evinc'd by words alone;
These may be utter'd, and forgot,
Yet love remain unknown.

The voice of heartless praise, or prayer,
The homage of the lip—
Can never to the Lord declare
Thy true discipleship.

Deep, deep within the heart must dwell
The love by Him preferr'd,
And there *obedience* must compel
To His most holy word.

To His most holy word—as it
  In Scripture is unseal'd,
To His most righteous law, unwrit,
  But in the heart reveal'd.

Be this, then, of thy love the test;
  Words may, like flowers, abound;
But deeds, like fruit, shall manifest
  The tree's true health is sound.

Thy hopes on no professions place,
  But pray, with humble awe,
Thy life may show, through saving grace.
  Obedience to His law.

THE TRUE SCHISMATICKS.

"These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."—Jude, 19.

LORD! save us from presumption's sin.
  Where such unhappily exists;
Since here thy word hath shown wherein
  The deadly guilt of schism consists.

No varying views of *outward rites*
Can for this imputation plead;
He who for these a brother slights,
Is only outward in his creed.

The true schismatick is not one
Who may for conscience' sake withdraw:
Those who would such seceder shun,
Have never learnt Love's holy law.

They only can deserve the name,
Whose lives and conversation show,
By proofs no candour can disclaim,
That they thy holy faith forego.

Who separate themselves from Thee,
Their sensual lusts to gratify;
And, while refusing Thine to be,
The Spirit they have quench'd—deny.

This is the schism whose end is death!
Lord! keep us in thy righteous way:
That, built on thy most holy faith,
We in the Spirit still may pray:—

And kept by grace in stedfast love
Of Thee, may thy salvation own,
Looking for mercy from above,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord alone.

A PRAYER AGAINST DECLENSION.

"Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."—Revelations, ii. 4.

SAVIOUR! preserve within our hearts,
The memory of our spousal day,
Lest sin, by Satan's specious arts,
Should steal our earlier love away.

That earlier love our spirits felt,
In visitation's soft'ning hour,
Bidding our hearts before Thee melt,
Our tongues confess Thy praise and power.

When, lur'd from joys of time and sense,
Thou through the desert wast our Guide,
And gav'st us smiling gardens thence,
By Thee with living streams supplied.

The memory of those days renew
Within our souls by grace divine,
Lest, to ourselves and Thee untrue,
Our fervid love tow'rd Thee decline.

If somewhat of its earlier zeal,
The world unhappily have reft,
Thy power and love once more reveal.
To cherish that which still is left.

That we, by penitence sincere,
May pardon for our fall obtain;
And, through Thy grace, in holy fear,
May do our former works again.

Lest Thou no longer shouldst reprove
In mercy, or in pity plead;
But from its place our light remove,
And leave our spirits dark indeed.

THE INVITATION.

"And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely."—Revelations. xxii. 17.

HATH the invitation ended?
Is the voice of mercy dumb?
Still the message is extended;
Still the call is—"Freely come!"

Still with sinners Jesus pleadeth
In compassion's gentlest tones;
Still the Spirit intercedeth
With unutterable groans.

Still the Bride, the Church—would gather
Every wanderer to her fold;
Still the Everlasting Father
Would with love each child behold.

Still the fount is freely flowing,
Christ hath open'd to redeem;
Endless life on all bestowing,
Who partake its living stream.

Then let each who truly thirsteth,
Freely to that fount repair;
And—while yet its tide out bursteth,
Drink, and grow immortal there.

While, by him whose ear is greeted
With the gospel's joyful sound,
Be a Saviour's name repeated,
'Till it circle earth around.

'Till, the diapason swelling,
Countless hosts in songs of praise,
Their Redeemer's triumphs telling,
Grateful halleluias raise!

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

"After this manner therefore pray ye."—Matthew, vi. 9.

FATHER of all! who dwell'st above,
Thy name be hallowed here;
As in those realms of peace and love,
Where saints that name revere.

Thy kingdom come; Thy will, alone,
Be done by man below;
As spirits round thy glorious throne,
Their pure obedience show.

Give us this day our daily bread;—
Not merely outward food,
But that whereon the soul is fed,
The source of heavenly good.

Forgive our trespasses, as we
In pardoning love abide;
Since none forgiveness win from Thee,
Who pardon have denied.

And lead us from temptation far;
From evil, Lord! restore;
For Thine the power, the kingdom are,
The glory evermore!

THE END.

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